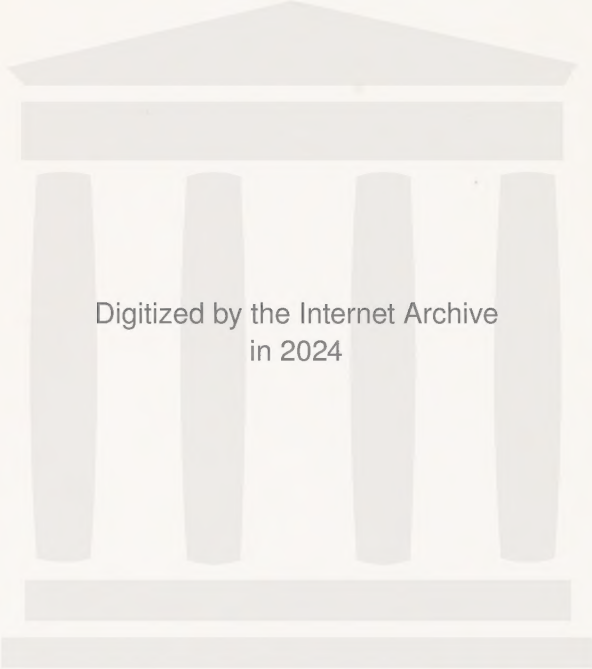


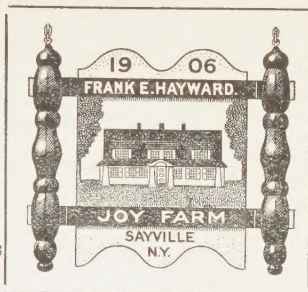
*Both Sides of
the Shield*

Major Archibald W. Butt



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BOTH SIDES OF THE
SHIELD



MAJOR ARCHIBALD W. BUTT, U. S. A.

BOTH SIDES OF THE SHIELD

BY

MAJOR ARCHIBALD W. BUTT, U.S.A.

LATE MILITARY AIDE TO THE PRESIDENT

WITH A FOREWORD BY

WILLIAM H. TAFT

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

AND

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR'S LIFE



PHILADELPHIA & LONDON
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PRESIDENT TAFT'S TRIBUTE TO MAJOR BUTT

A FOREWORD

Major Butt was my Military Aide. He was like a member of my family, and I feel his loss as if he had been a younger brother. As in Manila, as in Augusta, so in Washington, everybody knew Archie as "Archie." It was not necessary to add the title or the last name. Every one knew whom we meant when we spoke of "Archie."

I cannot enter a box in the theatre, I cannot turn around in my rooms in the White House, I cannot go anywhere, that I do not expect to see his smiling face and hear his encouraging tones. The life of a President is rather isolated, and those who are appointed to live with him come much closer to him than they would filling a similar function for other persons. The consequence is that the bond between an Aide and a President is very close. It enables the Aide to read the President, I suppose, and it certainly enables the President to read the Aide.

I first knew Archie Butt in the Philippines. He was then a volunteer in the Quartermaster's

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Department, with the rank of Captain. He was a very active officer, and had the reputation of being a very useful and faithful one. In the Quartermaster's office in that far off clime, there were a great many favors to dispense in the way of comfort, and he dispensed them with justice and yet in such a way as to endear him to every one who came in contact with him. His sunny disposition under conditions that prevailed there was marvellous; for in the Tropics, and under the somewhat trying circumstances existing when he was there, depression of mind and spirits was a symptom of the climate.

He came to Washington after having been appointed as a regular officer in the Quartermaster's Department, taking the important duty of Depot Quartermaster at the Capital. It was there that he attracted the attention of President Roosevelt, who made him his Aide. He was loyal to the President and his family while he served him, and retained their love always. Then he came to me and into my family, and became one of us, and was as much interested in the welfare of each as if he had been a son or a brother. When he entered a room, bad weather or good weather, his sunny disposition seemed to light it up and to make life somewhat more cheerful and more hopeful. He had a great deal

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of that lovable human nature that makes his memory very dear.

Now, the duty of an Aide to a President is very hard to fill. It calls for great self-sacrifice. A President sees but very few people continuously in a confidential way, and his Aide has to be with him all the time—when he is out of humor and when he is in humor, when he is silent and when he is talking. The Aide has to do the best he can to contribute to the President's peace of mind, and that is a burden that no one knows the weight of unless he has been an Aide.

An Aide has to stand a good deal because everybody assumes that what can be said to the Chief can be said to the Aide without hurting his feelings. Archie had sentiments and views growing out of his environment and his birth in the South that might easily have been shocked, and perhaps were sometimes, by remarks that were made to me as a Northerner, but he never betrayed the slightest feeling on that subject, and always reserved himself until in the quiet of conversation I saw how fixed his views were on certain subjects, and how he loved the South, and loved the people of the South, white and black.

He told me a story once that illustrated his feeling in that line. He said he was in Manila as a quartermaster, and had received orders, or

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had concluded, that he must cut down his force. So he cut off two or three hundred men—Filipinos, white men, and negroes—and had ordered the soldiers to exclude them from the office. There was a side door leading in from the wharf. After he had gotten them all out and was writing at his desk, a colored man, somewhat the worse for wear, sneaked in through the side door, and said, "Captain Butt, I would like to have a position." Captain Butt said, "What are you doing in here? I have ordered everybody out. Get out!" So he was put out. But in about fifteen minutes the same unlikely person thrust himself in again. Captain Butt said to him, "Didn't I tell you before to get out?" "Well," he said, "now look here, Captain Butt, you and I is Georgians, and I didn't know but you might give me a position just on that account." Archie said, "What could I do? I did not need him, but I had to put him on the force."

Later, Major Butt brought his mother to Washington, and I had the pleasure of meeting her and hearing her crisp sentences on everything that happened there, and on much of what happened in Augusta. He loved her devotedly—it always seemed to me he never married because he loved her so, and the greatest sorrow of his life was when she left him.

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Occasions for tests like that of the going down of the *Titanic* frequently develop unforeseen and unexpected traits in men and make them heroes. But with Archie, what he did was nothing but conformity to a rule of life, and it was just as necessary that he should do what he did as that he should suggest to me, for instance, when occasion arose, some kindly attention to somebody, that I should render it, and that he should be my representative in doing it. On the deck of the *Titanic* he was exactly what he was everywhere else. After I heard that part of the ship's company had gone down, I gave up hope for the rescue of Major Butt, unless by accident. I knew that he would certainly remain on the ship's deck until every duty had been performed and every sacrifice made that properly fell on one charged, as he would feel himself charged, with responsibility for the rescue of others.

The chief trait of Archie Butt's character was loyalty to his ideals, his cloth, and his friends. His character was a simple one in the sense that he was incapable of intrigue or insincerity. He was gentle and considerate to every one, high and low. He never lost, under any conditions, his sense of proper regard for what he considered the respect due to constituted authority. He was an earnest member of the Episcopal

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Church, and loved that communion. He had the highest ideals, he was a soldier, every inch of him—a most competent and successful quartermaster, and a devotee of his profession.

Archie Butt's character was single, it was straightforward. He had a clear sense of humor, and it lightened his life and the lives of those about him; but he was single-minded; he never had any doubt about what he ought to say. Life for him was not a troubled problem. He was a soldier, and he was appointed to serve under another; and to that other he rendered the completest loyalty. I very much doubt whether I have ever known a man—I have known women—but I very much doubt if I have ever known a man who had as much self-abnegation, as much self-sacrifice, as much ability to put himself in the place of another, and suffer and enjoy with that other, as Archie Butt.

Lacking nothing in self-respect, giving up nothing of what he owed to himself, he devoted himself with a singleness of purpose to the happiness and comfort of the President who was his Chief, and never did I know how much he was to me until he was gone.

If Archie could have selected a time to die, he would have taken the one that God gave him, and he would have taken it because he would

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have felt that there before the world he was exemplifying the ideal of self-sacrifice that was deep-seated in his nature, and that had become a part of that nature in serving others and making them happy his whole life long.

The void he leaves to those who knew him; the flavor—the sweet flavor—of his personality; the circumstances of his going, are all what he would have had. And, while we mourn for him with tears that flood our eyes, we felicitate him on the manner in which he went, and the memory which he leaves to the widest circle of friends—a memory which is sweet in every particular.

WM. H. TAFT.

ARCHIBALD W. BUTT

Major Archibald Willingham Butt was born in Augusta, Georgia, September 26, 1865; the third son of Joshua Willingham and Pamela Robertson Butt.

The first fourteen years of his life were spent in Augusta, but the end of that happy boyhood period came with the death of his father, which made it necessary for the lad to leave school, the Summerville Academy, and seek employment to help in the support of his mother and sister.

For three years he worked hard at various positions in this city. At the end of that time, through the good management of his mother, with the kindly assistance of her close friend and spiritual advisor, Rev. Edwin G. Weed, then Rector of Church of Good Shepherd, Summerville, Augusta, Ga., now Bishop of Florida, he was enabled to go to the University of the South, at Sewanee, Tennessee, and there his education was finished.

While at the university he seriously considered a journalistic career, his inclinations at this time being toward literature. His literary gifts were soon recognized and he became associate editor of the college paper. Previous to this the young man had made the acquaintance and became a favorite with General John B. Castleman, of Louisville, Kentucky, so as soon as his college

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career was completed he secured through the General a position with the *Louisville Courier-Journal*, and went direct from college to that paper. On the staff of this famous old paper he remained three years, and then went to Macon, Georgia, where he took a position on the staff of the *Telegraph*.

He remained in Macon only a little more than one year, when he went to Washington, D. C., as correspondent for several Southern newspapers.

His duties at the Capital brought him in touch with the great men of the country, and among them he made many warm friends. His ability was promptly recognized and his articles from the seat of government were regarded as among the most authentic written. When General Matt Ransom, of North Carolina, was appointed ambassador to Mexico, he selected Mr. Butt to accompany him as secretary, and this appointment really opened his public career. Returning, he took service at the beginning of the Spanish-American war, his personal friendship with Adjutant General Corbin securing for him a commission, January 2, 1900, as Assistant Quartermaster, with the rank of Captain, Volunteer Service. Just thirteen months later, February 2, 1901, he was advanced to the rank of Quartermaster, with the rank of Captain of Reg-

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ulars. Both commissions were given by President McKinley.

It was but natural that Major Butt should finally adopt a military career. His family is one of the oldest Colonial families in Georgia, but on his mother's side of the house he is a descendant of the Moseleys of Massachusetts. Admiral Farragut was a kinsman of Major Butt. His father was a soldier of the Confederacy, and his family sacrificed its all for that Cause.

Several of his uncles resigned from the army and navy at the outbreak of the Civil War to take service with the South, and it was this circumstance that influenced him to seek a commission at the outbreak of the Spanish-American war, for at that time there was not the name of a member of his family in either the army or navy, and he determined to enroll again in the service of his country. Since then five cousins have joined one or another branch of the service.

Much of Major Butt's time since securing a commission had been spent in tropical and sub-tropical lands. He went to the Philippines in 1900, and served there nearly four years continuously. While there he made a study of army transportation problems, and the results at once classed him as a specialist in this branch of the army work. His friends still tell of how he broke all records in the transportation of mules

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and horses across the Pacific, leaving Portland, Oregon, with 557 animals and landing 556 of them in good condition—so good, in fact, that they went to the field at once.

He was the first person to announce that a horse could make the trip across the Pacific without being unloaded at the Hawaiian Islands. So convinced was he of the feasibility of this plan that he diverged from his orders to unload at Hilo, and continued to the Philippines, taking in all 32 days to make the trip. His work in this department was invaluable, and resulted in the government's abandoning much of its unnecessary expense in the transportation of animals.

As a result of these studies, and their practical working out, he wrote extensively on the subject, and while in the Tropics made a special study of the diseases of horses. His work has become invaluable to all nations in the transportation of troops carrying horses, and his system was adopted by the British government in the transportation of its horses to Africa during the Boer war.

Captain Butt returned to America in 1904, and was given the important detail of Depot Quartermaster at Washington, which he retained until the last revolution in Cuba, when he was chosen as the officer to go to Cuba and prepare for the army of occupation. He established the

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base of supplies, and subsequently became Depot Quartermaster at Havana, where he remained until President Roosevelt recalled him to this country and made him his Military Aide.

Captain Butt immediately became a social factor at Washington, and his opinion on social matters was as eagerly sought as had been his opinion on matters pertaining to transportation. There was nothing the President called upon him to do to which he was not equal. He played tennis, climbed precipices, swam rivers, jumped horses with the President and finally, with only ten hours' notice, rode to Warrentown and back with him, a distance of 100 miles, and finished in a little over 14 hours. The condition of the weather, and of the roads materially increased the difficulty of this ride—the return trip being made, for the most part, in a blinding sleet storm and over frozen roads.

When President Taft entered the White House, he found Captain Butt, his old friend whom he had known well in the Philippines, and he kept him in the post of Military Aide. The Captain served President Taft with the same loyalty that he had served President Roosevelt, and it was said of him that, while he often had to stand between the President and parties who wished to see him, he neither made enemies for the President nor for himself.

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In March, 1911, Captain Butt was advanced to the rank of Major by President Taft.

Major Butt was probably closer to the President than any man in Washington. What he didn't know about White House affairs was considered hardly worth knowing. In all social affairs at the White House he was considered the directing genius. He was the first military aide to have the duties assigned to him at the White House.

Captain Butt's mother was a gifted and educated woman, and among his treasures was a story written by her of an old negro woman who "wished to die a lady."

Mrs. Butt didn't want her son to leave journalism. She felt that he would make his mark in that field of endeavor, and the brilliant and charming qualities of the present work attest how justly she estimated her son's gifts.

Major Butt was unmarried, and, while a social favorite, cared little for the glamor of the social swim at the Capital.

While returning from a visit abroad Major Butt was lost as one of the victims of the *Titanic* disaster on April 14-15, 1912, in the heroic circumstances which are so feelingly referred to in President Taft's Tribute.

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I.

“MR. PALMER: You will start for the South to-morrow and write a series of letters on the educational and social conditions existing in that section. Avoid the cities and beaten tracks and let your pictures be drawn from life. This will be an order on the business office for what money you may need.”

Such were the orders I found one morning on my desk in the City Editor's room of a well-known Boston newspaper. Of the labor involved in such an assignment I was ignorant, and I saw only a pleasant trip in that part of my country in which I had never travelled. I had been employed on the paper for a comparatively short time,—in fact, I had been in journal-

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ism for a period of less than two years,—so that such an assignment as the one now given me was highly flattering to me, and I knew it would be equally gratifying to my father, who had watched my career with that interest which attaches solely to an only son. I had not been out of Harvard very long when I had taken the advice of an eminent literary man, a friend of my father, and entered journalism as a first stepping-stone to literary distinction. The few short stories I had written, however, had been returned to me by the magazines to which I had sent them with a promptness that was calculated to dampen my ardor and otherwise to discourage me. I had been led to believe that my style was exceptionally good and that I was not without a keen sense of humor, at the same time possessing a proper appreciation of the pathetic.

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I had taken a prize at the High School for an essay, and later, when my talents began to develop at the University, I was elected to fill a place on the editorial staff of one of the monthly periodicals published there. I was chagrined, therefore, when my manuscripts, written legibly on fine linen paper, tied with the best silk ribbon to be had, came back to me. I began to form a very poor opinion of our magazines. Possessing an independent fortune, I determined to publish my writings in book form at my own expense. I took my manuscripts to a publisher, who, honest man that he was, was kind enough to tell me that people did not think much of books published at the author's own expense. Determined at length to get a proper estimate of my work, I sought out an old friend of the family who had achieved fame by his pen. He reviewed my stories, and in a

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ruthless sort of way, as it seemed to me then, told me that some of my ideas were good, but expressed clumsily. He advised me to cease all attempts at literary composition and to seek a place on a newspaper. "Writing must become a habit with you," he said, "before you can hope to express your thoughts gracefully. What you need most is ease, and if you can avoid the pitfalls of journalism, you may in time succeed in your ambition." It took me just another six months to make up my mind to follow his advice, and when I did so it was with some degree of humiliation that I discovered that there was not a reporter on the paper who did not write better than I. Constant application in my new undertaking, however, and the hard work I had done at the University soon brought me my reward. I was being singled out constantly for important local assignments and

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once I had been sent to Washington on a delicate mission. I picked up again the order which lay on my desk and read it over the second time. I thought I saw the ear-marks of politics in it, and while the racial question was not mentioned I believed that it was this problem I was to discuss. I had made a suggestion on this line some months before, but the Managing Editor had not taken kindly to the idea at the time. The order as I read it over seemed indefinite, I thought, and I started with it to the Managing Editor's room. As I presented myself before that austere little cripple—physical but not mental, for mentally he was a giant—I was outwardly calm, but my heart was beating a tattoo inside, for there were few of us who did not fear to stand before him unless very sure of the ground on which we stood. I said, however, in a business-like way, as if

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such assignments were daily occurrences to me,—

“ I have come to see you about this assignment, sir.”

“ What assignment? ” he asked.

“ For me to go South to-morrow,” I answered.

“ Oh, you are Palmer, are you? ” he said, calmly looking me over through his spectacles. “ I thought you were older. I have noticed your work and gave you the present assignment on account of it. Have you come to say you are not equal to it? ”

I was somewhat surprised when I learned that he did not even remember me, but the fact that he had judged me by my work was at least gratifying, so I hastened to say,—

“ No, sir, I feel perfectly able to do the work, but the order appears a little indefinite to me as to time.”

Without looking up again, for he had resumed his proof-reading, he said:

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“Take your own time, but I shall say two months ought to suffice. What I want are facts, not discolored, distorted pictures.”

He did not even say good-morning—indeed, he seemed to have dismissed me from his mind. With an indifferent bow I retired, wondering why Managing Editors think it a part of their official duties to be ill-mannered. I was sorry that I had not asked him exactly what he wanted, but on this point I felt reasonably certain, however, for there was to be a Presidential election the following year, and the more I thought of it the more certain I became that my letters were to be used to arouse sentiment in New England against the opposing party, and thereby make certain the electoral vote of that section. My work would not only make certain the New England vote, but possibly save the vote of some of the Middle Western States. My

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father had been an abolitionist and his father before him. They had been called doctrinaries by their neighbors, but they had lived to see those principles become the nation's shibboleth. My father lived to modify many of his ideas, but I refused persistently to modify my views as they had been inculcated into me by my rugged old grandfather.

As I read the order of my assignment over again it seemed to me to be a command to charge the enemy. The old abolition blood was in my veins and was running at high tide. With feverish haste I made ready for my departure. Packing up a few things and putting my writing materials in my grip where I could the more easily get at them, I started for what I still looked upon as the enemy's country.

As I sped south the possibilities of a brilliant future arose before me. When I

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reached Baltimore I looked from the window of the car and recalled the scenes enacted there, when my father was one of those stoned while on their way to the defence of their country. The day grew rapidly on, and as the train pulled into Washington the lofty dome of the Capitol, bathed in the fresh light of an April morning, dispelled my resentful thoughts and led them back to the beautiful scenes which were always uppermost in my father's memory whenever he talked of the South and of the friends he had made there after the bitter days of the campaign were over. After leaving Washington every station became of interest, and there was no detail from which I did not draw some moral. I had determined to pierce the border States and seek for the information I desired from the land where the palmetto, the pine, and the live-oak live side by side. The

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windows of the car had been raised, and through them came the bracing winds from the Blue Ridge, and I could catch occasionally the strange minor notes of the negroes at work in the fields. I was alive to every impression, and I took out my notebook to chain in my memory some of the passing scenes.

That evening I finished my first letter and mailed it from the train.

When I reached Atlanta I made inquiry as to the best means of reaching some of the outlying counties, where I could study the social and educational conditions of this people out of the beaten tracks and away from the thriving centres through which I had passed, and which, according to my preconceived opinions, were the result of Northern capital or New England energy. I remained in the vicinity of this city for several days, making journeys into the

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country and taking notes of the field-hands and making inquiry as to the wages paid and the amount of labor performed by the average hand. My zeal was unabated, and I was on the point of putting all my figures into a letter when my enthusiasm received a check that came near causing me to throw up my assignment, which I would have done without hesitation had I not feared it would mean a summary dismissal from the paper as well. On coming in from the factory district one afternoon I found a letter from the Managing Editor. It said:

“We want facts. Your letter mailed on the train found useless, and has been thrown in the waste-basket. If true, it was a very good editorial, but we do not want editorials from you. If you still have my order, read it over and you will find in it nothing about the racial question or political problems. Study the white

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people, especially the families of the old régime, and bear in mind always that whatever you write will be copied there. Your letters, therefore, should be just and truthful, whatever else they may be. If you were an artist with the brush, I should say paint a picture of some old colonial homesteads and ante-bellum plantations. Since you can't paint, write of them as they are. Bring the scenes in Georgia vividly before the people of Boston. They can draw their own conclusions. Let your pictures be of people and places only as you see them."

That was all; but it was sufficient to shatter my hopes and discourage all further attempts to make sure of the electoral vote of New England. Disconsolate, and with a vague sense of my own ignorance, I boarded a train that night bound somewhere in a southerly direction, I did not know and I did not care where.

II.

WHEN I awoke the next morning the odor which filled every crevice of the car told me that I had entered the pine-belt of Georgia during my sleep. I threw up my window and inhaled great draughts of fresh air. I felt invigorated and ready to carry out my assignment, no matter where it led me, the farther into the pine-forests and out of reach of managing editors, I thought, the better. Later in the day I left the main road and took a narrow-gauge line which I was told followed the bed of the Savannah River and passed through several of the most historic counties of the State, rich in memories of the past and peopled mostly by remnants of the old colonial and ante-bellum families, who had, in the past, made them the most influential centres of the State.

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The railroad wended its way through a beautiful rolling country studded with pines and cedars. The wild-flowers grew up to the very tracks and the earth seemed carpeted with soft, velvety moss. Through the pines I caught glimpses occasionally of stately old residences, with their gardens unkept and the weeds growing in wild profusion. Where the fences had fallen they had been left to decay, but the fields were ploughed and showed signs of cultivation at a cost of great labor.

We stopped at several stations, and around each there was an air of happy indolence that lent a charm to the dilapidated wooden sheds which stood for depots, and in front of these there was always to be seen some antiquated wagon or "carry-all." These latter were invariably filled with half-grown boys and girls laughing and chattering like a lot of magpies as

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the train pulled up. They were there presumably to get the mail, but as I thought more likely to exchange bits of gossip and to find out what was "going on" down the road. I gave myself up to listening to their chatter, and I found myself wondering as the train would start again on its slow journey how many of these bright and innocent faces there would be at the next station to greet us. It would, indeed, take some time, I thought, to get a proper estimate of these people, whose clothes would indicate that they belonged to the farming and laboring classes, but whose conversation, accent, and grammatical phrasing would lead one to believe they represented a class better educated and with more culture than one is likely to discover in such out-of-the-way counties as those through which we were now passing.

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By degrees the few passengers who had taken this train got off, and towards the end of the journey there was no one in the coach but a venerable looking old gentleman and myself. He wore a long frock coat and an old-fashioned silk hat. He represented a type I had begun to know and recognize. He seemed well known along the road. It was "Howdy, Colonel Turpin?" at every station now, and someone always asked, "How's Ellen?" His clean-shaven face would wreath itself in a smile as invariably he would make answer,—

"Ellen's well, but between the cooking and the music she has little time left to frolic with you young people nowadays."

"It's her own fault," said someone at one of the stations, "for all she has got to do is to choose which farm she prefers, that of Squire Hawkins or Jim Wadley's

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Hollyhurst." At this there was a burst of merriment from the young people in the wagons.

"Don't be putting such notions in my Ellen's head just now," he would laugh back. "Ellen and Bud have their old father and mother to look after for a while yet, to say nothing of the Pines."

"Bud can do that by himself," called out one youth. Then he suddenly turned red and hung his head as he saw the girls casting their eyes from one to the other and laughing.

"I dare say there are others of us who have used that argument to Ellen before this and many a time," added another boy scarce out of his teens, "so you need not bother to repeat it, Colonel."

By the time our train started again I had determined to introduce myself to the Colonel, for I saw material in him for

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a letter. By way of opening operations I asked him the distance to Oglethorpe Station, where I had expected to leave the train.

“About five miles, sir,” he said, and with a courteous, old-fashioned bow across the aisle he added, “May I ask if you are bound there?”

I told him that was my destination. He then continued:

“If it be not too impertinent, may I ask you what takes you to such an out-of-the-way place? You are not a lawyer from Atlanta, are you, sir?”

There seemed to me to be a note of alarm in the question, and he appeared greatly relieved and his face brightened visibly when I told him that I was not a lawyer and was visiting Georgia for the first time. I soon learned the cause of his anxiety as to the matter of my profession, for in a con-

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fidential whisper, which could have been heard throughout the car had there been others in it, he said,—

“When smart-looking young men like you come up this road they bring trouble with them usually, and as often leave more behind, sir.”

“How is that?” determined to burrow as deep as possible in this ante-bellum soil, which I believed to be rich from the wild and uncultivated growth of experience. “Don’t smart-looking men often come up this road?”

“Hardly ever but to foreclose some poor devil’s mortgage.” Here he began to laugh immoderately, and when his risibles had subsided sufficiently to explain, for I was somewhat surprised at his sudden burst of merriment, he said:

“I’ll bet you a pine-knot all sawed up against a bushel of potatoes that at a half-

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dozen stations bets are being made right now that you have come up to foreclose the mortgage on the Pines. That's my place, you know. I'll have a good laugh at their expense when I go down the road again."

"Are all the plantations about here mortgaged?" I asked.

"Mostly," he said. "I know my plantation is, and heavily too, but most of the planters don't like to acknowledge it. Old Bill Hollins vowed his wasn't for ten years, and then one day a fellow looking about like you came up and closed him out. He was so ashamed at being caught in a lie that he moved out of the county and has never been back since."

"I sincerely hope, sir, that your frankness in the matter may be rewarded by an indefinite delay in the foreclosure proceedings," I said, deeply touched at the honest avowal of the old gentleman, who, I

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saw, felt much deeper on the subject than he would have liked me to think.

“ I don’t know,” he said; “ I can’t tell. Up to this time Bud has been able to meet the interest regularly, and as long as he does that I suppose we have little to fear.”

Presently I asked what accommodations were to be had at Oglethorpe.

“ Mighty poor, mighty poor, sir; that is, if you stay in the town. But if you are going to be long in the vicinity, you might get board in one of the farm-houses outside of the town.”

I thanked him and then explained that I was a writer and that I was collecting material for a story.

“ A book? ” he said, showing great interest at once and carefully scanning my face through his spectacles.

“ Yes,” I answered, which was the truth, at least, for I had suddenly conceived the

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idea of collecting data for a novel; for where else, I thought, could there be better characters and scenery than right here? My aged companion looked thoughtful for a moment and then said,—

“ May I ask if you have any references, or if you know anybody in these parts? ”

I mentioned several persons within the State whom my father had known, and these seemed to satisfy him, for he continued:

“ If you are of a mind to accept my hospitality, we will be glad to put you up and to share what we have with you. I guess Bud would enjoy your company, and Ellen and Mary—Mary’s my wife—would make you welcome.”

“ It would be a great convenience to me,” I said, and thanked him, “ for I know nothing of this country and you seem to be very well acquainted.”

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“ I ought to be,” he said, “ for my family has been in these parts since General Oglethorpe, that great philanthropist and friend of the poor, first came to Georgia. The last time he came to this country he made my great-grandfather’s house his headquarters when on his way from Fort Augusta to Savannah. Just before the Revolution he sent my grandfather a portrait of himself in token of the esteem in which he held his father. He lived to see the Colony he had planted become an independent State, you know, sir, and he seemed mighty proud of the record old Georgia made during the War of the Revolution. The Pines, as we call our home, was built just after his death, and his picture has the place of honor in it now. It is a sorry place since the Yankees came through here and used it as a stable, but we keep it with the hope that some day

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the fortunes of the family may go out of their eclipse and that some worthy son will arise to restore it to its former position of importance in the Commonwealth. But what there is left you will be welcomed to, my lad."

Before I could properly thank him the whistle blew and our train pulled into Oglethorpe. The Colonel advanced, and, calling out to an old negro, whom he addressed as Jefferson, ordered him to bring the wagon nearer, as there was a trunk to get.

"If I know'd yer had gists, Mars Ge'oge, I'd sure have brought the coach," said the old darky, looking apologetically at the wagon he was on. The Colonel told him that I was going to stay some time, and that he "reckoned" I would know all they had soon and so he would not begin by offering excuses.

"By the way, sir," he said as we stepped

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off the platform, "I have not the pleasure of knowing your name, though you have heard mine often enough this morning." I had, indeed, overlooked that detail or else felt indifferent to it, but I handed him my card, which he read carefully and then asked:

"I reckon you ain't any relation to the Palmers of Kentucky; I roomed with two men from that State of your name years ago when I was at Princeton."

I told the Colonel that I was not from Kentucky, but thought there was some kinship. I had intended telling him that the families had never met, and that in all probability the Kentucky Palmers would not know of me, but I did not finish my explanation, for as soon as I mentioned kinship he grasped my hand warmly and said:

"Then, sir, you can make yourself at home in my house as long as you care to,

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for there were never two finer fellows than those Palmer boys, even if they did join the Yankee army during the war. I tell you, sir, I am proud and happy to entertain one of their blood at the Pines. And now, Jefferson, drive fast, for we must let Miss Ellen know we have a guest."

The Pines was a distance of some five miles from the town limits. It was appropriately named, for after we entered the grounds we passed into a primeval forest of tall and stately pine-trees. The long needles waved in the wind and there was a mournful cadence in the branches, different from the song we hear in the Northern forests. The ground was covered with pine-straw, and it might have been falling there and ungathered for generations, so thickly did it seem to lie. We crossed a branch over which there had been built

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an old stone bridge, now covered with vines.

“That, sir, was built as a memorial to General Oglethorpe,” said my old host, seeing my curiosity, for the bridge was out of all proportion to the size of the stream. “When the General paid his memorable visit to this place it was right there, sir, that he drew from his pocket a small flask, and after offering my grandfather a dram took one himself. You must know, sir, that the great philanthropist was supposed to be ‘a teetotaler,’ and certainly never took a drink in the presence of any of his colonists for fear of setting them a bad example. That little act shows as nothing else could the great confidence and esteem in which he held my worthy progenitor.”

I was anxious to hear more of this episode, but feared to get the Colonel started

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on what was evidently to him an important bit of family history, and which I suspected strongly had become a hobby. "Some day Ellen shall walk here with you," he added, "and show you the inscriptions on it. You will find them interesting."

Ellen again. I was beginning to feel the keenest anxiety to meet this Ellen and to wonder what she could be—half cook and half lady, I had begun to think from the little bits I had picked up concerning her during the day. We passed from the pine-trees into a long avenue of cedars, and when we emerged from this the Pines in all its solitary and lonely grandeur stood before us, rich in coloring from the setting sun, that bathed it in a crimson glow. As I looked at it in wonderment, it might have been a dream out of the past that had taken shape and floated now across my vision. Its front and sides were flanked

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with Colonial columns of the Doric type, and the low wings running at right angles to the body of the house were covered with vines which almost hid the low porch. This porch was supported by diminutive columns of the same graceful curves. I was so moved by the beauty of the whole at first that I failed to note that some of the columns were on the point of falling and that others were crumbling to decay. The plaster had fallen from many of them, showing a dull-red brick behind. But these evidences of decay gave an additional charm to the scene, augmenting its perfection as a whole and keeping it in perfect harmony with its owner and the neighborhood of that section. It seemed to typify the generation then living there and fighting against its own decay. I was awakened from my dreamy thought by hearing the Colonel calling loudly for someone to get

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the horse. Presently there came from around one of the wings a little, half-naked urchin, who said that Mrs. Turpin had gone to the Trig funeral, and that Miss Ellen was cooking the dinner, and that "Young Marsa" had not come from the fields.

"Then tell Miss Ellen, Sammie, to put another finger in the pie, for I have brought a guest home with me. Now, sir," turning to me, "if you will come with me, I will show you your room and bid you make yourself at home."

We passed under a huge doorway and entered a large hall which was as wide as any room I could remember in my grandfather's house in New England. It was almost bare of furniture. There were two or more large mahogany sofas which had once been lined with black horsehair, but this latter was so much worn that the mat-

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ting showed beneath it in places, and in others it was patched with bright-colored calico and sometimes with pieces of faded silk. The Colonel led me up a flight of stairs, bare of carpet but clean and polished. "You will be right over the billiard-room," he said, opening a door which led into a beautifully lighted room on the east side, standing in the centre of which was a large, canopied bed. "If you care for billiards," he continued, "I will wager that Ellen can give you ten points and beat you out. And now, sir, we have dinner at six o'clock, for Bud likes to have his dinner when he comes from the field instead of in the middle of the day, as he says he feels more like a gentleman. Until then, sir, I hope you rest well."

I had not asked the question before, but now summoned the courage to say:

"Colonel, there is one little thing I

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should like to have settled. Business is business, you know," I said, laughing, for I did not like the look of dignity he suddenly assumed at the mention of business. "In justice to both of us, I ought to ask you how much will be my board by the week."

Had General Oglethorpe himself arisen to confront the Colonel I do not think he could have shown more surprise than he did at my simple question. He drew himself up with a dignity which was truly commanding, and, speaking in a suppressed voice, he asked me:

"When have the Turpins adopted the custom of taking money from their guests, I beg you to tell me, sir? If you were not a kinsman of my dear friends, the Palmers, I would at once show you the door."

I stood covered with confusion. "I

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humbly beg your pardon if I have offended you, Colonel, and I am greatly mortified to have so deeply wounded you, but until this moment I thought you had been kind enough to receive me as a boarder. I felt grateful enough for that, and you should not put me under obligations which I can never repay and which I have no right to accept. But you yourself are somewhat to blame," I added quickly, for I saw that he was still deeply offended. "You told me that I might get board in one of the farm-houses and immediately offered me the hospitality of your roof."

"The Turpins are not farmers, sir, they are planters, and if we have to cook our own meals, we serve them with no less degree of hospitality than when a nigger stood at each door at the beck and call of everybody in the room."

"Colonel Turpin, I hope you will for-

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give me my stupid blunder or else let me leave your house at once."

His face relented into a smile, and extending his hand he grasped mine.

"As you say, lad, I am not blameless in the matter. But we are getting a little sensitive down here. And now forget all about it, and, what is more, don't ever mention it to Ellen or to Bud, for they would think their old father had been lacking in dignity, else a mistake of this kind were impossible."

When he left me I fell a prey to regrets over my stupid blunder and, what seemed worse, my apparent deception concerning the relationship with the Kentucky Palmers. As long as I thought I was going to an inn of some kind or to pay my board I had not thought it worth the while to explain the mistake into which the Colonel had fallen. I felt it to be too late now to

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confess that in all likelihood there was no kinship at all; or, if any, so remote as to form no ties of blood, and certainly not to earn for me any consideration on that score. Feeling like a culprit, I threw myself on the bed, determined to leave the Pines at the first moment I could do so without offending my kind old host.

III.

WHEN the pickaninny, Sam, knocked at my door to tell me that dinner was served he found me prepared to do justice to anything in the way of food which might be placed before me. I had been travelling all day, to all intents and purposes without anything to eat. While anxious to satisfy my hunger, yet it was with some feeling of embarrassment that I started down-stairs to meet the Colonel. He met me at the foot of the steps and, motioning me to follow him, led me to a room in one of the side wings. There I saw two silver goblets, frosted on the outside, with their rims completely hidden by long and graceful bunches of mint. Without sitting down he handed me one and took the other himself.

“Of late years, Mr. Palmer,” he said,

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“we have abandoned the time-honored custom of drinking mint juleps before our dinner; but in order that you may feel perfectly at home and rest certain of the fact that I feel no resentment on account of your natural mistake, I have taken the liberty of asking you to join me in one of these, sir,” holding the goblet as if pledging my health.

“This delicious fluid should be sipped only while sitting, but as the family is assembled for dinner, I will ask you to forego the pleasure of a chat over our juleps and drink standing. I pledge your health, sir, and that of your kinsfolk, the friends of my young manhood.

It was the first julep I had ever tasted, and I shall never forget with what delicious force the straw threw the liquor against the roof of my mouth. The goblets were soon emptied, and I was ushered

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into the parlor, where we were evidently expected, for the occupants were standing.

“ Mr. Palmer, let me present you to my wife, Mrs. Turpin; to my daughter, Ellen, and to my son, Howell Cobb, whom I hope you will soon address as Bud. Ellen, my dear, bid our guest, Mr. Palmer, welcome, for he is a kinsman of my old friends, the Palmers of Kentucky, of whom you have so often heard me speak.”

“ Any friend whom my father brings to us is welcome, Mr. Palmer, but we make you doubly welcome on account of the ties which bind our house to yours.”

She extended her hand, which I took, and for the first time looked into that frank, open face. I did not think her beautiful then, but I was unprepared for the subtle ease and grace of manner and the exquisite poise of her head and the patrician face that was turned to me without any

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sign of embarrassment whatever. Her eyes were large and brown and her hands small and white. These were the only things about her that sunk then into my memory.

“Mr. Palmer, father has taken us somewhat by surprise and you must excuse many things, but we make you right welcome; and when you get tired of playing billiards with Ellen and talking politics with father I have a good dog and gun at your disposal.”

The young man who was addressing me was tall and big, and when I had first entered I had mistaken him for a lubberly farm-hand, but here he was, making me welcome with the ease of a courtier. Mrs. Turpin was a small, delicate-looking woman, but was gowned in a faded royal purple velvet, evidently the remnant of an anterior date.

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“ You young people can make plans at the table. In the meantime Ellen’s roast is getting cold,” said the Colonel. Then I remembered about the cooking, and thought for a moment what a sacrilege it would be to devour anything prepared by those lovely hands, but a sudden convulsive pang of hunger banished my sentimental thought and I offered my arm gladly to Mrs. Turpin, while she led the way to the dining-room. It was, in fact, an immense hall, wainscoted with oak, but the walls above the panelling were stained and, as far as I could see, even mouldy. It was a gloomy-looking place, but the table was made bright and cheerful by two big candlesticks. On the table was a profusion of dishes, some silver, others of rare old china, and, as I saw later, there was hardly one of the latter which was not broken or chipped, but each steamed with some sa-

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vory vegetable or meat, and I soon fell in the way of handing plates around the table and helping others from the dishes in front or near me, just as we were wont to do in the railroad eating-houses in New England when I was a boy. The conversation was easy and homelike, and I saw at once that I was not looked upon as a stranger. No questions were asked me about myself, for which I was thankful, and I soon saw too that the Colonel did not intend to relate the details of our meeting that morning or to account to the other members of the family for his sudden impulse to invite me to become a guest at the Pines. So, as if by mutual consent, we refrained from making any reference to the matter, and I determined to leave it to the Colonel to make any explanations which he might think to be best.

The Colonel told Miss Ellen what the

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girls had said about Jim, at which she laughed heartily, but grew very red and showed some annoyance when he related what they had said about choosing a farm in the county, and especially when reference was made to Squire Hawkins. I shall never forget how my plate looked after it had gone around the table. It had left my place empty and came back piled to the brim with every sort of vegetable on the table. Miss Ellen laughed when I confessed that I did not know how to eat rice, nor would she rest content until she had taken my plate and arranged it according to the manner of eating rice in that section. She covered it with butter and sprinkled a little salt of it and, handing it back to me, bade me eat it, telling me that it was a part of my education. She laughed again when I wanted to put pepper on it, but she would let her father put a little

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dish gravy over it if it were not palatable. I ate it, not because I liked it then, for I would have eaten so much sawdust had she told me it was good and bade me do so.

Every now and then, after I had swallowed some rice, I would look up to find her eyes fixed roguishly on me, and then we would both laugh. She seemed to relish the idea that I did not like the rice and that I was eating it because she had fixed it and told me to do so. I made this fact very plain to her by the faces I would make in swallowing it. She confessed afterwards to a little malice in forcing me to eat it, and later, when I really began to like it, she would often say, "Will you have your rice with cream and sugar on it, or a little pepper, Mr. Palmer?"

After dinner we went on the porch, where Bud brought us pipes. "I hope you like the pipe," he said as he handed me

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an old brier-root; "we have given up cigars lately—on account of the tariff," he added with a big, good-natured laugh. I said I did; that it was my chiefest luxury in my university days, and I still preferred it to cigars. Colonel Turpin said that if I did not object to music Ellen would play us something; that she always did when he took his after-dinner smoke. I said that I could not imagine greater luxury, and I leaned back prepared to undergo any amount of torture and outrage to my artistic nature, for I knew something of music, as my father had been a splendid performer on the piano and had given me the benefit of his knowledge. Instead of hymns and waltzes, however, there floated through the window to us the sweetest notes I seemed ever to have heard. I sat dreamily thinking of this lovely girl and her odd surroundings when she appeared at the

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window and asked if there were anything I liked especially.

“ I do not know if you care for Chopin,” she said. “ Father does not know it is Chopin, but it is the music he likes, and so I always play some of the nocturnes for him.”

“ The truth is, Miss Turpin,” I said, “ I did not think of what you were playing, but was merely feeling the effect of the music. Your playing seemed to me to be a part of the scene out here, as if it were an accompaniment to the moon in its wanderings or to the stars in the silent watches.”

My speech sounded like flattery, and I blushed as the thought came to me. “ I hope you will forgive my praise if it seemed extravagant,” I said, “ but I only said what was in my heart without reflecting that you might take it for flattery.” I

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had been accustomed to pay compliments at will, and sometimes, I fear, was given to flattery, but I would not have had this young girl to think me guilty of such ill-breeding for anything in the world.

“If that is the way you feel,” she answered sweetly, “I will play something for you and trust to pleasing father,” and going back to the piano she played something—I do not know what. Bud said he had never heard her play it before, and though I asked her often after that to play it for me again, I never heard it; yet the strains even now go through my head when I sit in the moonlight or lie awake at nights thinking of Ellen.

She disappeared after a while, to clear the table and wash the dishes, I thought with some resentment. Colonel Turpin talked politics, and I soon learned that he was decided in his views, though somewhat

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mixed in his politics. I found out that he was addicted to the habit of writing "pieces" for the papers, but never under his own name. He chose rather such noms de plume as "Vox Populi," "Citizen," or sometimes "Patriot." He did not believe that writing was the profession of a gentleman unless one could hide one's identity; yet he felt that the public should be educated by this means. He was a Democrat, but believed in a high protective tariff; he disclaimed being a jingo, but thought it the duty of the Government to avenge the wrongs of any people persecuted by a foreign power. And so the night wore on and the moon arose higher in the heavens. I heard Bud and the Colonel discuss the work on the farm, and judged that the former and two or three negroes did it all save in the picking season. There was a contradiction about this strange household which was

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perplexing to me. Where had Miss Ellen mastered the piano? and why was Bud, with the apparent education of a cultured gentleman, wearing jeans and doing the ploughwork in the fields? I had begun to weary of conjecture when Miss Ellen returned and offered to show me the view from the cupola. It was a weary climb to the top of that old house, but one felt repaid on reaching there as the panorama unfolded itself in the moonlight. The moon was but a fortnight old and the night cloudless. Miss Ellen pointed out to me the field where the army of Sherman had camped on its famous march to the sea, but had not a word of criticism to make of that great General. She told me of the strong young manhood that was developing to regenerate the land, and seemed to think the freedom of the slaves a blessing to both people. She promised to take me to the

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negro settlement some day and show me how they lived. She had a Sunday-school there of colored girls, "For," she said, "it is going to be through the mothers of the colored race that we will some day reach it and elevate it to what is good and moral." I stood spellbound, as it were, by her earnestness and faith, and all my preconceived opinions began to fall away under the influence of this little, brown-eyed girl in a gingham gown.

That night after I retired to my room the instincts of the newspaper man, which had lain dormant since arriving at the Pines, began to stir, and I could not help thinking what a picture this household would make if held up before a Boston audience. But to turn these kindly people into an object-lesson would be the basest ingratitude. Yet put this idea from me as I would, it would recur to me during the

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night, and scene after scene, with Ellen and Bud always in the foreground, kept shifting themselves across the mental canvas, and argue as I would that to make use of this homely life with its poverty and pride, its dignified endurance of changed conditions, as the subject of a news-letter would be an ill return for the hospitality I had received, yet I could not put aside the longing to pen the picture as I saw it and to paint it boldly, in order that others might see it in the same light as it had appealed to me.

The next morning I was up early, the sun, in fact being only an hour ahead of me. Thinking it would be an excellent chance to see something of the place and study its character more in detail, for I had become deeply interested in everything connected with the Pines, I dressed hastily

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and started for a brisk walk. As I was making the half circuit of the house by way of exploration I came upon Miss Ellen, carrying an armful of kindling wood.

“Why, Miss Turpin,” I cried, “I had no idea of finding you up at this hour.”

“You forget the dual character I play,” she laughed. “I am not early, however, for it is late. But you are responsible for it, as you demoralized the household last night in encouraging father to discuss politics. Doubtless you saw all his fallacies, but was kind enough not to point them out to him.”

I had been much entertained, I said, though his politics appeared to be somewhat mixed, and his ideas were quite different from those I had expected to hear him express.

“Yes,” she answered, “he is half Democrat and half Republican, with a dash here

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and there of Populism, I fear, but it makes him very angry to tell him so, as he thinks himself a hide-bound Democrat. He can never forget that Henry Clay believed in a protective tariff. I think next to General Oglethorpe he admires the Kentuckian more than any of our historical characters. But I must not allow myself to be dragged into political argument, for I see you are ready to take up the cudgel for Clay, no doubt, and since you have come bothering about so early you must make yourself useful." She then showed me the woodpile and told me to bring enough to the kitchen to last two full days.

"Miss Turpin," I said a little later as I entered the kitchen with my arms loaded down with short oak logs, "is it really necessary for you to do this work?"

She looked with surprise at me, and I thought I saw a faint color come to the

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surface of her skin, but I could not tell, for she was lighting the fire. She saw that I was earnest in my question and, still kneeling in front of the stove, she turned her frank face towards me and said:

“ I would resent the question, Mr. Palmer, did I not know that a kind heart prompted it. Yes,” she added, “ it is as necessary for me to do this as it is for Bud to plough. Of course, you must have heard from your relatives that the Turpins were greatly reduced. The house is heavily mortgaged, and to meet the interest we have to save in every legitimate way. Bud wants to hire a cook, but I will not listen to him. Father is determined that the moment he defaults on the interest that minute he will give up the Pines to the owners, for such they are who hold the mortgage on it. And oh, Mr. Palmer, you don’t know what it would mean to father and

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mother to move from here now. Besides too we would be no better off, even worse, I think, for we would have no place at all. Bud and I would be glad to go into the world and run our chances, but it can't be thought of, not now." She sighed and continued to make the fire.

By degrees I found out all there was to be known of the family, for there were no skeletons there. After the war it seems that Colonel Turpin had lived in a reckless sort of way, still keeping up the style of living he had grown accustomed to before the change of fortune in the Southern planter's life. It was not until Bud had finished his college course and Miss Ellen had completed her studies that the real condition of the family became known. It was these two who had finally saved the plantation and home by pledging the interest on the mortgage. There was one more

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child, a boy of sixteen. The brother and sister were keeping him at college now and had planned that he should take the course in law after his academic studies were completed. Was there more courage in New England, I wondered, and was it not the blood of the cavalier that was telling now? She had given me her confidence without restraint, for she believed me then to be one with the Kentucky Palmers, and I, weak creature, dared not disabuse her mind for fear of losing that confidence and friendship which this fictitious relationship had inspired.

“And now, Mr. Inquisitive,” she said, “if you have finished your catechism, I will mix the batter and you will go for a long walk and get an appetite for breakfast.”

She had rolled up her sleeves in order to knead the dough, and with her arms

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bared to the elbow she pointed out to me a road which she advised me to take, telling me it would bring me to the old Oglethorpe Bridge.

“But your father promised that you should take me there,” I said, “and that is a debt of honor you must pay.”

“Very well,” she laughed, as if preparing to go, “but you will go without your breakfast, and, what is worse, Bud will call you out for making him lose his, for he comes from the fields hungry and out of temper sometimes.”

“I would not mind going without mine,” I said, “but Heaven forbid that so fine a fellow should go without his.”

Tears came into her eyes, but she soon brushed them away, and with a smile said:

“You touched a weak spot then. Bud is the salt of the earth, and he deserves to find diamonds in this dull soil instead of

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fighting out his life for a few pounds of cotton.”

I started down the road which she had pointed out, wondering what had come over me when my life in Boston had seemed a thing forgotten in a few hours and my work and literary career become a secondary matter with me. I passed through an old orchard, where the opening apple-buds lent their fragrance to the air, and by my side it seemed to me that the unseen presence of Miss Ellen walked.

The dogwood was blossoming down by the branch, and when I reached the pine-trees their crisp needles, stirring in the breeze, seemed singing some blithesome air instead of wailing mournfully, as they had done the evening previous. I saw her little rose garden, and picking the only flower then in bloom hid it away beneath my waistcoat. There was an impassioned

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picturesqueness in the unkept lawn, and out of the cedar and underbrush I might have expected to see some Dryad come. I found the bridge by the path Miss Ellen had pointed out, and for an hour sat reclining upon its ivy-covered arch conjuring up such scenes as I imagined had been enacted here when its owners lived in affluence, and when women in silks and satin and powdered hair sat in the oaken dining-hall and danced the stately minuet on rich carpets and under many lights. In my mental vision I thought I saw one with the features of Miss Ellen who glided past all others and stood in gay-colored brocade waiting to be wooed like a princess. The picture faded, and I saw the real Ellen, none the less regal, but in place of the scorn the other wore upon her lips there was a gentle patience, and about her form there hung a simple cotton gown more beautiful

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than the stately gown woven in my dream picture. I must have been asleep, then, after all, I thought, looking at my watch, for it was past the time when she told me to be back. Hurrying home the way I came, I found them seated at the breakfast-table, and I pleaded guilty to an early morning nap among the woods.

“And your dream?” she asked, as if reading what was in my mind.

“Was of a beautiful woman clad in silks,” I said, “and she stood in an old hall waiting for a prince to come.”

“Ah, what a sad awakening!” she said, laughing sweetly.

“But wait until I tell you of the change that came ‘o’er the spirit of my dream,” I added.

“And I will some day show you the first scene of your picture,” she said softly.

“And the last part?”

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“ I do not know what it is and you have not told me.”

“ But I will some day, and ”—looking into her deep brown eyes and almost speaking in a whisper—“ I like it better than the first portion of my picture.”

I did not see Miss Ellen alone again that day. Squire Hawkins called in the afternoon and stayed to dinner. He was a kindly looking man, not over fifty, I should say, and he wore a prosperous air, and he seemed to me to have seen a good deal of the world. Miss Ellen did not play for us that evening, for she and the Squire took a long walk in the moonlight, and when she came home she went to her room, only stopping to say good-night as she passed us on the porch. The Squire stayed a while longer and entertained us with stories of his university days in Germany, where he had been educated. He seemed to treat

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Miss Ellen, when he was with her, in such a gentle, fatherly way that I laughed at the idle gossip that I had heard about his courting her. I enjoyed his company and laughed heartily over his stories, which were good and well told. He had some good cigars, which Bud and I enjoyed, but the Colonel would not smoke one, for he said they would upset his nerves and make him "hanker after the flesh-pots of Egypt." The Squire tried to banter him out of his resolution, but the Colonel was obdurate and stuck to the pipe.

IV.

EARLY Sunday morning the old coach was got ready, for Miss Ellen sang in the church choir, and we had to make an early start in order that she might get there on time. "I reckon you are not a Churchman," said the Colonel, "for, if I remember rightly, the Palmers were always blue-back Presbyterians; but most people down here are Episcopalians, so don't you go unless you feel so inclined."

I acknowledged to being a member of the Presbyterian Church, but expressed a willingness—nay, even an eagerness—to go, for I knew that Miss Ellen would not be at home. The drive that morning was a memorable one. Bud sat on the box and did the driving, with Pickaninny Sam by his side. Colonel and Mrs. Turpin, Miss Ellen and I, occupied the seats on the

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inside. I had seen the George Washington coach at Mount Vernon, and I could not help thinking of it as I looked at this heirloom of the Turpins. I might have thought that it had once been used by General Oglethorpe himself, so ancient did it look. The Colonel assured me in a most serious vein that it had never had that distinction, though there was a tradition in the family that it had been occupied by General Washington on his famous visit to Fort Augusta after the days of the Revolution, when he stayed at Meadow Garden, the home of the Waltons, the head of which family had been one of those to sign the Declaration of Independence. The coach was still strong and did not look out of place as it rambled through the pine forests, but it would come near to upsetting at times when going down hills where the roads were washed into deep trenches.

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Every now and then Bud would bring the team to a stand and, telling us that the trace or some other part of the harness had broken, would get down and, taking a bundle of twine from his pocket, tie the ends together, and soon we would start again. I cared not how many times the traces might snap or how long it took us to get to church while opposite to me sat Miss Ellen, her eyes laughing into mine every time the horses were brought to a stop.

“ Bud, the harness is getting pretty old,” said the Colonel with grave dignity when Bud halted the coach for the fifth time, I think, and just within sight of the old church.

“ Yes, father, it must be considerably older than I am,” answered Bud cheerfully as he used the last bit of twine he had.

“ But it will hold together another six

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months, I reckon," smiling into the coach at Miss Ellen and me.

"Do you think the coach will hold together that long, Bud?" nervously asked Mrs. Turpin, for her faith in the vehicle was but little; indeed, she had suggested using the wagon before we started.

"How can you ask such a question, Mary?" said the Colonel, showing annoyance. "Has it not lasted ever since George Washington visited Augusta. It will be here when we are gone and serve your grandchildren well yet, I'll be bound," at which Miss Ellen colored and Bud laughed heartily.

Bud drove to the back of the church, where there was a long row of horse-stalls. There were several old coaches standing by, but none as ancient or as grand as ours, and I found myself taking pride in the

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apparent antiquity of the family I was visiting, and remember quite well sneering at the newly painted buggies which were lined along the fence. We not only had a pew well up under the chancel, but occupied a place of honor among the middle-aisle aristocracy. I had never heard Miss Ellen sing and did not know now whether she was soprano or alto. I was tempted sorely to look around just once to see her in the organ loft, but so many eyes were fixed on me that I kept mine fixed religiously on the minister. After sermon the Turpins held quite a reception under the pines in the yard, and I was given an opportunity of seeing in what respect they were held in the county. Several of the young men invited me to hunt with them and offered me their guns, shells, and dogs.

“We know Bud is pretty busy,” they would say, “so if you say the word we will

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ride by for you some day this week." Miss Ellen was the centre of attraction, and every man tried to edge himself within the circle that surrounded her in order to receive one passing remark from her at least. She seemed entirely unconscious of the influence she exerted in her limited sphere, yet apparently took this homage for granted, or so it appeared to me.

"We must have a dance in the hall while Mr. Palmer is here," I heard her saying to some of the girls who were standing near, at which they immediately set up such a clatter and chatter as a hundred sparrows might be expected to make upon the first warm day in spring. The following Friday was settled as the day, and all, boys and girls as well, agreed to come Thursday and help cook the supper for the party, and each agreed too to bring something. Margaret Robertson said she would bring

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all the sugar needed for the cake, Bert Simmons promised three quarts of cream for the sillabub, and Jim Barrett said he would make up the rest that might be needed; Ruth Howard would donate flour, and another offered chickens for the salad; and so on down the list.

“Be sure to bring them picked, George Adams,” said Miss Ellen, laughing, to the lad who had donated the chickens, “for if Sally Stovall is there you will be of no assistance, as we know from experience. And two of you girls must come prepared to spend the night of the ball to help clear away the remnants the next day.” All volunteered, and Miss Ellen had a hard time to choose between them, so highly was this honor prized. The rector, coming out and hearing what all the chatter was about, delivered a lecture upon the frivolity of youth and ended by saying:

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“ And if no one has seen about the music, I promise to furnish that as my share. I will bring my old violin and be one of the band myself,” which announcement was greeted with applause, for I heard afterwards that no one could keep such good time as Mr. Lamb, and the darky band always played better when he led it.

That afternoon a number of older people in the county called, and Miss Ellen served tea on the shady side of the house under the porch. Later Bud and I rode horseback. He took me to see the camping-ground of General Sherman, which Miss Ellen had pointed out to me the night of my arrival, and from there we took a circuitous route home. He told me many of the difficulties of farming in the county. We passed a number of farmers, and from each I learned something and stored up in my mind many a quaint anecdote for my

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letters from these simple country folk. One time when Bud had ridden forward to consult someone about getting extra hands I rode up to a stolid looking individual whom I saw sitting on a rail fence near by whittling a stick. His beard and hair were unkempt and his whole attitude was one of supreme indifference to his surroundings.

“ Good-morning,” I said.

“ Same to you,” he answered without looking up to see who had addressed him.

“ How are your crops this year?” I asked.

“ Poor,” was his monosyllabic reply.

“ Good last year?”

“ Nup.” With maddening indifference.

“ I hope your crops will be better next year,” I ventured again.

“ Doubt it,” was all he would answer. The field back of him did not look en-

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couraging. Despairing finally of getting any information from him, I drew rein, preparing to join Bud, adding, however, before leaving,—

“ Well, that’s too bad.”

With sudden animation he stopped whittling for a moment to look up and remark,—

“ ’Taint as bad as you think, my friend; I don’t own this land.”

I rode off laughing at this quaint conception of the value of land. He had not intended to be either witty or humorous, but was sincere in trying to disabuse my mind of a false impression I might have of the extent of his troubles. When Bud rode up he explained to me that the man only farmed on shares, and had he owned the land he would have been held responsible for the interest on the mortgage. Indeed, he said that to own certain of the

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land around that section was regarded as a calamity.

That ride with Bud gave me much material for a letter, and when I went to my room I wrote until after midnight. I touched only on the general condition of the planters and petty farmers and made use of such apt comments as I had chanced to pick up away from the Pines. I read and reread my letter to make sure it could not be traced to Oglethorpe or its immediate vicinity. I was satisfied that it would describe many of the older counties in the State, but looking back now it seems to me that I was too general in my deductions and that the illustrations, while unique, did not give a proper conception either of the manners of the people or of the conditions of the country, save in the exceptional case. But I had been trained to look for the exception, I fear, which I think is the main

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fault of all young people who have a pen put into their hands, who are prone to point out the ridiculous side of life instead of seeing the manhood and the strength which often underlie conditions, no matter how strange they may appear at first.

But my work for that week was done, and I arose the next morning with the feeling that I could do with my time as I wished without trying to remember incidents or conversations which might make interesting reading matter in Boston. I rode to the station and mailed my letter, and on my return I found Miss Ellen engaged, as she said, in putting the house to rights, "For if we leave all until the last day, very little will be done," she said, and so I spent the day lending a hand here or lifting a piece of furniture there. Miss Ellen mended many an old lace curtain that day, while I would sit, pipe in mouth,

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watching her fingers move backward and forward and keeping my eyes on her face when her own were fixed on the work in her lap. I was on the point several times of telling her why I had come South, and to confess that there was no kinship possibly with the Kentucky Palmers, but after several efforts, which really got no further than planning them, I would forego all determination to play a strictly honorable rôle, and then too I feared it might put Colonel Turpin in a false position as well as myself, or so I chose then to think. That evening Miss Ellen played more beautifully than I had ever heard her play before, and she sang some old-time melodies for us too. Her voice was sweet and she sang simply and without effort. Before bedtime we had gathered around the piano and sang glees, even the Colonel remembering enough from his old Princeton days

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to lend discord occasionally. It was an uneventful but happy day, and it swept me many leagues nearer to the goal to which I had been drifting unconsciously since the first minute I had seen Miss Ellen and looked into her honest brown eyes.

The next morning some of the young men of the county, Bud's friends, came for me to go hunting with them. I got into some of Bud's hunting togs, and with his gun on my shoulder rode with them to the hunting lodge, from which point we scoured the country for many miles that day. The sport was new to me on account of the game we found. I had indifferent luck, however, though the others filled their bags with plover, robins, doves, and larks. There were plenty of blackbirds, but we scorned shooting these, though I was told they make a good pie, which is a favorite dish with the colored hands on the farms.

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I saw something of each member of the party during the day and found them all, to a greater or less degree, in love with Miss Ellen. Jim gave me much information about the others, but added,—

“ She just laughs at them all, and won’t even let them pay her compliments, as they do to the other girls.”

“ And you? ” I said.

“ Oh, me. She would not even look at me,” said the manly young fellow, looking me squarely in the face, not ashamed to confess the hopelessness of his love. I made up my mind that if it ever came in my way to do Jim a good turn, no matter how my own suit came out, for I was now intent upon winning Miss Ellen, I would do it for his open and honest confession.

We were a happy party as we lunched at the lodge. We barbecued our robins and some of the doves on little spits over a

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charcoal fire and stewed some with rice. We rode home early, however, more to see Miss Ellen, I think, than for any other reason. Each would have left all his game at her feet, but she would not have it so, but said she would take what I had killed in part payment for my board, which innocent remark brought a deep flush to my cheek, remembering, as I did, my unhappy mistake when I first arrived at the Pines. We described our sport and she showed interest in everything we said and all we had done. Presently, looking at the sun, she exclaimed:

“Come, go home, you boys, for I am not going to ask you to stay to dinner, and be here early Thursday morning, or I will not dance with any of you at the party.” It took them but a few minutes to get their horses and disappear down the road.

“And you, sir,” she said, turning to me

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as we lost sight of the others, "what are you going to do in the way of reparation, now that you and your friends have put me back in my work?"

"Set the table and bring the wood," I cried.

"Come, you shall set the table, for the wood has been brought in already." I followed her to the dining-room, where she threw me the table-cloth.

"Be careful," she laughed, "for it will not bear rough handling, though I dare say father would tell you that it has lasted since General Oglethorpe breakfasted off it and therefore will last after we are dead."

And so we set the table, Miss Ellen running to the kitchen every now and then and coming back to straighten the knives and forks, telling me that men were no earthly good about a house. Once our hands touched while placing the plates, and in-

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stantly, as if by instinct, we faced each other and our eyes met. After that she kept on the other side of the table from me and later sent me upstairs to dress for dinner. When I came down there seemed to be a glow on her cheek and in her hair there was stuck a wild rose which I had brought her from the woods.

The next three days all was bustle. The boys and girls came on Thursday, each bringing something in a basket. So much cooking I had never seen. One was put to beat the whites of the eggs and another the yolks. Someone was detailed to mix the cake and still another to watch it after it had been put into the oven. Margaret Robertson was given a squad and ordered to decorate the hall with greens. The jelly was made and someone was sent with it to the springhouse, where it was left to cool and harden. Every now and then the Col-

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onel would appear at the kitchen door to tell us what times they used to have before the war when he was a boy.

That night when all were gone and Bud had fallen asleep in a chair Miss Ellen and I went on the lawn to look at the moon.

“Miss Ellen,” I said, “I am happy here, and I hate to leave the Pines.”

“Why do you talk of going?” she said, her voice subdued and her face turned away.

“Because I do not want to outlive my welcome,” I said.

“No one does that at the Pines. As you see, there is not much to offer, but our friends are always welcome. Bud likes you, and father seems younger since you came.”

“And you?” I said, drawing a step nearer to her.

“Oh, I.” She gave a little gasp and ended with a laugh. “It is as easy to cook

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for five as it is for four, so don't think of leaving on my account."

"That is what hurts," I said. "If you did not have to do this, or if I had only known you long enough to tell you all that is in my mind," I ended bitterly.

She held up her finger and, laughing in my face, said: "But you haven't, you know. So you must stay a long time and then come back some day and tell me," she added roguishly.

"Never," I said. "I will tell you before I leave if I have to stay the year out."

"Bravely spoken," she cried, "and I will do what I can to make you take Christmas dinner with us. And now remember to be nice to all the homely girls you see to-morrow evening, and I promise not to get jealous even if you dance with the pretty ones as well."

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Bud was still asleep when we got back to the house. We roused him and all went quietly to bed. I did not sleep much that night, and somehow I did not think Miss Ellen did either, for I did not feel as lonely as when everybody was unconscious in that spacious mansion.

V.

THE girls who had been invited to spend the night at the Pines came early the next day, and I went to the fields with Bud, for Miss Ellen told me that I would only be in the way if I stayed at home. I saw Bud at his plough and watched how cheerfully he did the work of the day laborer. I lit my pipe and walked several of the furrows with him, and then, heart-sick at seeing this fine specimen of young manhood trudging wearily to and fro in the thankless soil, I wandered off in the woods to dream of Miss Ellen and weave schemes for the rest of the family when she would have become my wife. When? The question brought with it a flood of doubt, for, after all, would she give up the work she had undertaken or would her pride allow her to accept any assistance for her family. I

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felt there were depths to her nature which I had not been able to sound in the short time I had been there. For fear of wounding her I had remained silent, but I was now resolved to speak to her before leaving, and had I received orders that night to return to Boston I would have told her of my boundless love and asked her to become my wife. Still wavering between my inclination to declare my love and fear of being too precipitate, I returned to the Pines. I did not see her until dinner-time, however, then only during a hasty meal, after which we assisted her to clear the table and place a number of small ones on the side porch for the party. We laid the collation for the evening's entertainment and then went to dress.

It was with some misgivings that I donned my evening suit, but on coming downstairs I found the Colonel arrayed in

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one of an anterior date and Bud transformed from the ploughhand of the morning in the suit he had worn at the time of his graduation. A number of young girls had arrived before Miss Ellen came down, and the men were assembled at the foot of the stairs as if waiting for her.

My heart seemed to stop beating as I saw her lithe and graceful figure, clad in an old brocade of her mother, coming towards me. Her hair was built high on her head, which seemed to change her whole appearance and made me start as I remembered my dream picture. The brocade was faded, but its gloss and richness remained. Her shoulders were bare and her tilted chin gave her the air of some quaint old mediæval picture come to life.

“Am I not in keeping with the house?” she asked, interpreting my gaze.

“You are like a queen,” I said.

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“Then you shall pay me court for this one night,” she answered, and held out her hand to me, which I took, and with the manner of an old-time Southern gentleman, just as I had seen Colonel Turpin do, I bowed low and for a moment let my lips linger on the tips of her fingers.

“You have other courtiers,” said one of several men who came forward to join us.

She held out her hand, and as she did so she looked at me for a second. She withdrew it gracefully and added with a smile, “I was only admitting a new one,” and then bade me follow her. She introduced me here and there and told me how many times I must dance with each. We went on the porch, and standing there I was again struck with the resemblance to the lady in my dream.

“You are like the first part of my picture,” I said softly.

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“Then let me play it for this evening,” she said. “And if you can imagine me a Colonial dame, you shall be a courtier from King George’s court.”

“Good,” I cried, “if you will admit that I have come across the seas a-wooing.”

“As you will, my Lord,” spreading out her gown and courtesying. “But I will not be responsible for the consequences; so see to it that you play well your part, else I will send you to your king again.”

After that I addressed her only as “Most gracious lady” or “Fair Mistress Ellen.” I wooed her in the strange and quaint language of a hundred years ago. Sometimes she seemed startled at my earnestness, and when thinking my speech too fervent she would bid me go hence and add another wallflower to my already large bouquet. I would straightway return and tell her of the court life, and wove amid

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my imagery an odd mixture of my New England home. Once, taking her hand for a moment and looking into her eyes, I said,—

“ Ah Ellen, I love you well and I would take you to a court in truth where you would find a royal welcome, and you would be a queen to everyone who knew you, and I would so guard you that neither poverty nor sorrow should ever come near you or to those you love.”

“ I have nought to do with courts, my Lord,” she said with a certain pathos, and I knew she was thinking of her duty at the Pines. “ So go back to your king, and, whether he be ambition or gold or both, forget the simple Colonial dame who more often plays the part of dairy maid. And now,” she said, looking into my eyes and laughing, “ go and seek out every maid over twenty-nine, and when you have led

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them through the graceful minuet come back to me."

And I would do as bid and dance some old-time waltz with some lonely maid, and then return to Miss Ellen's side only to be sent away again to someone who she noticed was not dancing. Finally the supper hour was announced and I was made happy by Miss Ellen, who chose me as her partner for the march. Just as we were forming into line someone cried,—

"It is the hour for the wishing-stone," and then one and all, save myself, for I did not know what was meant by the wishing-stone, joined in the clamor. Miss Ellen yielded at length, and, still holding my hand and bidding me give the other to the girl behind me, and so on down the line, we started out of the house through one of the deep, low-cut windows. We circled the porch, crossed the gardens, and

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passed down the terrace. The moonlight filtering through the trees glimmered brightly on the colored frocks as we sped down the cedar lane. At length we emerged on an open knoll in the centre of which was an old stone sundial covered with ivy. We formed a circle round it, and Miss Ellen, letting go my hand, stood on a step by its side, and calling one after another by name bade each lay his or her hand on the bare surface of the stone, where the ivy had been cut away, and to make a wish. One looking on might have thought we were a band of secret plotters taking the oath of allegiance on a tomb. It was no jesting matter, I could see, for each one in that gay party approached the stone in silence and reverence. The only sound that broke the stillness was that of Miss Ellen's voice as she called each name in turn. At last my name was called, a

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little more gently than the others, I thought, and Miss Ellen, seeing me approach, held up her hand and motioned me to stop.

“And now, Mr. Palmer,” I heard her saying, “as a stranger to the wishing-stone it behooves you to approach it reverently. There is no reason to tell the others this, for they know the legend and its secret charms; but to you who know it not and who come as a stranger to it, tempt not its anger by deriding it, even in your thoughts, or its indifference by wishing for what is impossible. It was at this stone that my great-great-grandfather wished for his bride, and in less than a fortnight they were wed. He enjoined his sons to seek this spot before wooing the women of their choice, and it is a strange fatality that all of our family who have not done so have gone to their graves unloved old bache-

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lors and the women who have derided it as old maids. Of later years it has become the custom for the love-sick youths and maidens in the town and in the county to seek it out and to test its charms, and many a happy home owes more than we may imagine to the legend which clings about this ivy-covered dial. The moment has arrived when you can test its power too."

Already I had become a firm believer in the wishing-stone. Laying my hand on it and looking into the lovely eyes of Ellen, I made my wish and added a prayer that it might find favor with the fates. After I had finished we joined hands again and made three circles around the stone. Then all began to laugh, and someone started up the rollicking chorus of,—

" 'Tis love, 'tis love,

" 'Tis love that makes the world go round."

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All joined in save Miss Ellen and me, for we strolled back somewhat slower than the others.

“What did you wish?” I asked, but she only shook her head and said she could not tell.

“I wished that you——” I got no further, for she gave a startled cry that checked me before I could finish the sentence.

“Don’t, oh, don’t!” she said. “You have already said too much. I ought to have told you not to tell your wish, for if you do the fates become perverse and mock you. If you even hint of what you have asked in secret something will happen to mar its complete fulfilment. I am sorry you spoke about it at all,” and I thought her face grew a little paler.

I dared not speak again, and we walked on in silence and joined the others in the

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old oaken dining-room. Mr. Lamb asked the blessing and the girls sat down, while the men waited on them and brought them supper. After a merry hour we danced again, and the incident of the wishing-stone was soon forgotten in the frolic of the old Virginia Reel. Miss Ellen led this old-fashioned dance with me, and many a pretty ankle was displayed that night as toes were pointed and courtesies made, and many a little love-scene too went on that night, but I was too busy with my own affairs to watch what others did. When the candles had burnt down to their sockets and Mr. Lamb said the band had struck, then began the good-nights, which lasted for another half an hour. The wagons were brought round and the horses saddled, and soon the whole gay company started like a cavalcade. Long after they had left we could hear them singing through the pines.

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Bud saddled his horse and rode out into the night, to think of some young girl, I thought, but Miss Ellen said no, that sometimes when he became restless he would ride for hours and return always with a brighter heart and more cheerfully take up the burden of his life again. When I bade Miss Ellen good-night on the landing I held the tips of her fingers for a moment.

“You are my queen to-night,” I cried earnestly.

She let me raise her fingers to my lips and looked down at me in a sad, sweet way. Then, laughing softly, and somehow, I felt, a little bitterly, she said,—

“Your queen of to-night will be your cook again to-morrow.”

Before I could reach her side, for my impulse was to throw myself at her feet and pour out my love to her, she glided swiftly up the stairs.

VI.

WITHIN the next week I received a copy of the paper with my letter in it, prominently placed on the first page, and a note in the same mail from the Editor congratulating me on the excellence of it. He told me to send one or two more from Georgia and then to push on and write up the bayou counties in Louisiana. He liked the dialogues and suggested that I give more interviews with the farmers. I read my letter in print, and it again struck me that I had not made it clear to my conservative readers that it was to the sons of the anebellum, slave-holding families that the South had to look for its regeneration and renewed prosperity; that it was this element which was rebuilding the fortunes in that section, and not the few men from the North who had gone there to invest money.

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If I dared to draw a picture of the Buds and the Ellens of the South, how the people of the old Commonwealth would read the future of this sunny land and appreciate the struggle of its younger generation to overcome the obstacles which they had inherited in consequence of war.

A fine sense of honor had kept me from making use of the life at the Pines as a basis for a letter, but I longed to handle the subject as I saw it and to make others see it through my eyes and appreciate its beauty. Shut in my room away from the influence of Miss Ellen, of Bud, and even of the Colonel, I argued that such a letter could do no harm and might induce much good. I do not hide from myself even now that there was with me a certain satisfaction in pleasing those in the home office, nor did I conceal from myself then the additional prestige such a letter might give

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me with my critics. The Editor had complimented me on the first letter; what would he not do when he received one written with a pen guided by love and every word of it poured from the heart? If Miss Ellen loved me, I argued, she would only rejoice with me over my success—and then too she might not see it. This last thought brought a blush to my cheek and I started up, determined to show her my letter and tell her what I contemplated doing.

What evil genius led me to change my mind I do not know; it might have been the Fates of the wishing-stone whom I had angered by partially revealing the secret I had confided to them. But at the time I was pleased to think it was a confidence I had no right to give her until I had told her of my love. Then too if I, who was as jealous of the family honor as Bud or even the Colonel himself, saw no impropriety in

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making use of their heroic struggle with misfortunes, surely there could be none, I thought. When I should have told her of my love, together we would talk over these hard times and together we would read my description of them and laugh over it, or possibly cry, for it was always the pathos of the life at the Pines which I saw and not the humor. When a woman loves she always understands, I said to myself, but I did not know then how sensitive these old families had become of criticism, nor how deeply they felt their changed conditions. I had only seen their fortitude and bravery, for they would have thought it beneath them to complain of their poverty to others.

Unless I wrote some such letter, which would afford me a reasonable excuse for remaining another fortnight at the Pines, I would have to leave in a day or two at the

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longest, for the suggestion of the Managing Editor was nothing less than a politely worded order. Cajoling myself into this belief, I hesitated no longer. My mind once made up, I was seized with a fever to write such as I had not known since the first days of my career in journalism. Taking out my writing-pad and throwing myself across the bed, I wrote with an enthusiasm I had seldom experienced. If one has not felt this feverish desire to write, he or she cannot appreciate the feelings which prompted me to hold up every detail as I saw it and to lend it color where color might be lacking. Loving Miss Ellen with a passion that absorbed me then, I described her as a holy priest might paint the Madonna whom he worshipped, and with the accuracy with which an artist might put upon the canvas the features of his wife and children. My blood ran

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rapidly through my veins as I sketched Miss Ellen in bold relief and as faithfully described her honest father and manly brother. The names and the locality were concealed, but not more effectually than the artist might hide the name of the mother model who sat for the Madonna. One who had known the artist and his model would see in the wrap of the Madonna a shawl the wife had worn for a score of years in the humble neighborhood, and in the infant Christ the idealized features of the model's child. When describing Miss Ellen and her family I felt inspired and uplifted, and left nothing out which I thought would enhance the letter as a picture. When I had finished it I read it over carefully, altering not a line, even adding here and there a sentence which would lend one more bit of color to the whole.

With this letter I sent a note to the

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Editor telling him that I would remain in the vicinity of Oglethorpe another fortnight unless he wrote me to the contrary. I said there was much more material about Oglethorpe which I thought could be used to advantage. So highly did I think of what I had written that I felt reasonably certain he would make no objections to my plans, and in another two weeks I hoped to have secured Miss Ellen's consent to become my wife.

She seemed to know by intuition what was in my heart and what I had a mind to do, for she avoided being alone with me, and whenever we would walk after that she would ask Bud to go with us. There was a gentle dignity about her during these last few days which kept me at a distance, and if I paid her a compliment she would show annoyance, and when our conversation would become personal in its nature

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she would remember that she had left something unattended to or would find some excuse to leave me with a half-finished sentence on my lips. I soon saw that she did not want me to speak to her of love, though she could not prevent me telling her of it with my eyes and by the silent way I would watch her when she would work. Squire Hawkins came again one evening, but she did not walk with him, and once when Bud got up to leave I saw her lay her hand ever so gently on his sleeve, which was sufficient to have kept him in his seat all night had she wished it.

One morning she received a letter at the breakfast table, and after opening it and glancing at the signature she slipped it in her belt, and when breakfast was over she went quietly out of the room and I did not see her again that day. For several days, in fact, she avoided me altogether, and I

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became wretched in the thought that I had been mistaken, after all; that she cared nothing more for me than she did for anyone else, even Squire Hawkins. In fact, I was not so sure about the Squire. I heard that he was the richest planter in the county and had the proud distinction of owning the only plantation which was not encumbered with a mortgage. He was an old friend of the family and Bud liked him, and Miss Ellen herself did not seem to have anything against him. I might be a pauper for all she knew, and so I told myself, but on thinking it over in my room at night I became convinced that Miss Ellen would never marry save where she loved, and that she did not love the Squire I could have sworn.

As the days slipped by she became more like her former self, and one afternoon

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when it was raining she consented to play a game of billiards with me. Suddenly she stopped, and as I watched her I thought her face perceptibly paled. A moment later there was the sound of horses' hoofs on the gravel and we heard someone alight.

"Come, Mr. Palmer, I am beating you," she said with an attempt at gayety which was but poorly assumed. "It is your shot and you stand there dreaming."

Just then Pickaninny Sam came in to tell Miss Ellen that the Squire was in the parlor. She seemed irresolute for a moment, and then her face became hard as I had never seen it before. She laid down her cue and started to leave the room without a word. The blood flew to my face and hot words to my tongue, but, restraining myself as best I could, I cried, —

"Miss Ellen, if that man has dared to

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force his attentions on you or to annoy you——”

She bade me hush. “Squire Hawkins is all that is good and kind,” she said. “His only wish is to serve me and my family. You must say nothing against him in my presence, Mr. Palmer.”

“That man wants to force you into marrying him, Miss Ellen. ’Tis outrageous!” I cried, beside myself with anger. “He is old enough to be your father.”

She smiled sadly and said, “Almost old enough to be my grandfather.”

“Surely any fate is better than that. Such a sacrifice would be shameful. If you must sacrifice yourself at all, let me——”

She put a stop to my passionate words, and before the mute appeal in her eyes I stood silent.

“I am going, Mr. Palmer, and I must

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ask you not to speak what may be in your mind. I have a question to solve which no one in the world can help me to answer, and if I could not solve it without assistance I would be unworthy the regard or friendship of any man. No," she added, for I had opened my lips to speak again the words of love that rose to them, "if you value my good opinion, be silent."

"Miss Ellen," I half whispered, "do you know how it will end?"

"I do not, Mr. Palmer," and she left me a prey to doubts that seemed to tear my soul asunder. When a woman hesitates I thought it always means yes, and had she not told me herself that she did not know how it would end. I spent the remainder of the afternoon in my room in an agony of despair, and in the loneliness of that great, half-emptied chamber I cried to God to prevent such a sacrilege. The next day

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and even the next one after that I never saw her alone for a moment. Once I asked her to let me speak to her, if only for a minute.

“Not yet,” she said. “I am not worthy of your kindly thoughts. I wish you could forget me.”

VII.

EVERY day now I was expecting a letter from my paper ordering me to leave Oglethorpe. Each morning I rode to the post-office as if to meet my fate half way. I was in an agony of suspense. I resolved that if my orders came before I had reached some understanding with Miss Ellen to resign my post and remain in the vicinity of the Pines until I had either won her for my wife or else forced her to declare herself engaged to Squire Hawkins. I never believed that she seriously considered such a step until she had told me to forget her. Even then I would not despair, but I was resolved that if she thought me poor she should continue to think me such until she had become my affianced bride. I fully believed her capable of marrying the Squire for the sake of lifting the mortgage and

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freeing Bud from the drudgery that was telling on his health and, what was worse, breaking his spirit. For herself she did not think. It was for the others. It had always been for the others. I had reason to think that in the matter of worldly goods I was the equal of the Squire, but had I told her of this I verily believe that it would have militated against me, for she would not sell herself to the man she loved, while she might sacrifice herself to one whom she regarded almost as an aged relative. I resolved to stand my ground and fight every inch of it with Squire Hawkins, and I was equally determined to tell my love at the earliest moment, so that there could be no mistake as to my intentions.

The opportunity came sooner than I thought, for the next day being damp and chilly we remained indoors, Bud alone being forced to face the rain. Mrs. Turpin

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had gone into the kitchen to get warm, she said, for the sitting-room was damp and bad for rheumatism. I was only waiting for the Colonel to go for his afternoon nap to speak what was in my mind to Miss Ellen. Presently she looked up from a book she was reading and said,—

“Father, there was another of those letters copied in the Augusta papers yesterday.”

As I heard her words my heart seemed to cease pulsation. I had never known that they had seen these letters, for they had not spoken of them before, probably because they did not want me to see them. My face grew scarlet and I was thankful that the room was gloomy and dark.

“Yes, Ellen,” he said, “even some of our own people laugh at us when they get rich, so we can’t expect our enemies to do less. Have you got the paper, my dear?

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I had to laugh over that last description of what we had come to. It was very, very funny."

"Funny! Oh, father, to think that you can see anything funny in such misery as he depicted! The writer does not see with the eyes of a gentleman or else he is blinded by prejudice or prosperity. How I should loathe to be such a man. I did not want you to see this last letter, father, so I burnt the paper. It was too true, too true," she cried, and I saw her eyes fill with tears.

She laid her book aside and went to the window to mend a rent in the lace curtain, but I thought more to hide her feelings from us. "The writer does not see with the eyes of a gentleman." With that one sentence she had shattered to pieces every argument I had used to myself that day in the room. She had not made use of any choice rhetoric, such as I had used to

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describe her, nor did she study the effect of her phrasing, but with one natural sentence, spoken from the heart, she seemed to paint me as I was or as she would always think of me after this. I realized how far my ambition had carried me and how low my literary instincts, as I had thought them then, had sunk me. In the reaction I saw myself as others would see me, and in my remorse I believed that I had sacrificed her for some temporary advantage in my profession. And I had fancied that she would understand, forgetting that her scale of honor and truth was as far above mine as heaven is above earth. In the silence that followed I suffered a life-time of ordinary humiliation. To be unknown and yet denounced was like being alone with truth. My identity should be hid no longer, and I resolved to tell her that it was I she had denounced. As low

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as I seemed at that moment, I was not so low as to take her hand until I had confessed all. The past month rose before me, and I asked myself if I was indeed a gentleman measured from their stand-point. At any rate, I could not remain one and be silent.

The Colonel crossed the room and passed out into the hall. I got up and stood leaning on the back of the chair in which I had been sitting.

"Miss Ellen," I said, "I have something important to say to you. It is not what you think," for a pained expression came into her face; "it is a confession I have to make."

"Yes, Mr. Palmer," she said, and turned from the window to face me. The sun had come from behind a bank of clouds and crimsoned the checkered panes of glass, and her hair, catching the rays that filtered

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through them, framed her in a halo and to me gave her the appearance of a saint. Her face was pale and her long eyelashes were fringed with tears.

“Miss Ellen,” I said softly, “it was I who wrote those letters.”

For a moment she did not speak, and when she did her voice seemed passionless.

“Then it was you, after all,” was what she said. “I had refused to entertain the thought even until you yourself confessed it. Even now it seems too horrible to believe. And I stopped speaking to my best friend merely because she half-playfully suggested that it might be you.” She said this more to herself than to me.

“Why did you not tell this to me before,” I said, “and I would have explained?”

“Why did I not tell you?” she asked,

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her voice breaking with anguish. "Because I thought you were a gentleman and you were our guest. It would have been an insult to have mentioned it. Such a suggestion would have been a reflection on him you ridiculed and on me, whom you would have made believe you loved had you dared to speak the lie upon your lips."

"Love you," I cried, "I would die for you!"

"It is the only way you could ever prove it now," she said. "Oh," she continued, "if you had only levelled your ridicule at me alone. But father, poor old father. I am glad he will not see that last letter; he would hardly think that one funny."

She looked at me, and her eyes suddenly seemed to blaze with scorn and contempt.

"Yes, I see it all now, and the wonder is I did not see it before. It was he whom

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you described as a broken-down aristocrat, who descanted on politics and wrote pieces to the paper telling the President how to run the government. It was mother who dressed in worn-out velvet gowns and sat in state at the dinner her daughter had cooked, and it was I who cooked the dinner and played sonatas and nocturnes for the amusement of our guests. God, why did I not see you as you were? Yes, and these are the hands," she cried in anguish and scorn, holding them towards me that I might see them, "that have cooked your meals for the past four weeks, and these are the same hands that played for you while you smoked your pipe and heard father descant on politics. How poor and miserable we must have seemed to you. All that I could have forgiven, but you dared to soil my hand with your kisses.

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They will burn deep here," she said, pointing to her fingers, "long after your ingratitude has been forgotten."

"Ellen, for God's sake have pity!" I cried. "I have laughed at your poverty as if it were my own. I am rich,—I never told this to you before,—and I felt that the only use of my wealth in the future would be to relieve the burdens of those you love. This night—nay, this very afternoon—I was going to ask you to be my wife, from which moment your father, mother, and brother would have been mine also. It was this very poverty and the fortitude with which you bore it that has made me love you. After you spoke this afternoon I could not tell you of my love until I had confessed first that I was the author of the letters which wounded you so deeply."

"I am glad you spared me that last hu-

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miliation. I can never forgive myself for being happy in your company nor for spurning the hand stretched out to lift us from this degradation."

"Squire Hawkins," I said in bitterness.

"Yes, Squire Hawkins, whom you would have insulted as you have us. And to think that just because I had listened to him I believed myself unworthy of your love. You must excuse me now," she added in cutting tones, "for I must go to prepare your dinner. I suppose there will be one less to provide for to-morrow?"

She started to leave the room, but I stood in front of her.

"No, I will not go. You do not understand. It was with love welling in my heart that I wrote that last letter. I had been ordered home, and I wrote that letter that I might stay another fortnight. After you

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had promised to be my wife I would have told you all and together we would have read it, and in the richness of the future we would have laughed over it together. No, I will not go. I will stay and tell Bud and the Colonel. They will understand and plead for me. And if you love me——”

“If I ever did, you killed it the moment you confessed to have written so about one you professed to love, one whom you should have protected and have helped to hide from the world that which she feels so degrades her. Instead of which you hold it up to publicity and to the scorn of the world. You cannot stay here longer. Don't force me to tell father or my brother; that would be more than I could bear.”

She put her hand towards a chair as if to keep her from falling. I came a step

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nearer, but she drew back, involuntarily steadying herself, and looking me in the face and with a voice vibrating with emotion said:

“Don’t touch me. I never want to see you nor to hear of you again.”

She swept past me, and I sank into a chair, overcome with grief and mortification. How long I sat there I do not know. Every time I heard a footfall I would start up expecting to see her come back, thinking in my foolish heart that she had relented. Bud came in and found me sitting in the dark. He told me dinner was ready, and we entered the dining-room together. Miss Ellen came in late, for it would have been unlike her to have stayed away. In a perfectly natural voice she told them I had been called away. Bud begged me to stay, and the Colonel and Mrs. Turpin made me promise to come again. That night was a

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dismal one. Miss Ellen would not play and soon went to her room. I left the next morning, Bud remaining from his work to drive me to the station. Miss Ellen bade me farewell in the hall, but avoided taking my hand. As the wagon turned into the cedars I looked back, and only the Colonel and Mrs. Turpin were standing on the porch to wave me a farewell. I hardly spoke to Bud on the way, but I made him promise that if anyone should get ill at the Pines he would write to me at once. At the station I found a letter from the Managing Editor telling me that my last contribution was the cleverest bit of writing I had ever done and that the paper had advertised another one for the following Sunday.

I tore his letter into fragments, and going to the telegraph office wrote out the following telegram and sent it:

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“Accept my resignation. I will leave for the West tonight on personal business.”

I grasped Bud's hand, but was unable to speak a word. I boarded the train and sat for hours, my head resting on my hands, with my face turned towards the Pines, my soul full of sadness, with not a ray of sunlight in my heart.

VIII.

I DID not go West immediately after leaving the Pines, as I had intended doing, but remained within the State, hoping vainly to get some word of forgiveness from Miss Ellen. In my calmer moments I reviewed my visit to the Turpins, and the letter which she so condemned seemed to me to be my least offence. Though I understood her resentment and appreciated the position she had taken, I felt, however, that I had made a mistake in obeying her, and now wished that I had remained at the Pines and confessed everything to Bud. I believed then, as I do now, that he would have understood me better than Miss Ellen had done and would have pleaded my cause for me, though I doubt whether he or anyone else at that time could have shaken her

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determination not to admit me to her friendship again.

I would wake up each morning resolved to quit the State that day, but before noon I would change my mind, as I seemed utterly incapable of tearing myself from the neighborhood of the Pines. I even looked and longed for some change of feeling which might blunt the edge of my grief, but none came, and my love seemed to grow stronger each succeeding day. It was maddening to think that I had lost her, and what gave this sorrow a keener edge was the knowledge that I had forever put it out of my power to be of any service to her or to lend assistance to those she loved. I would become a prey at times to the keenest pangs of jealousy. I had no doubt that the Squire would renew his suit, and I feared that she might be led, in her bitter

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resentment towards me, to accept his hand in marriage. I wrote her several letters begging for her forgiveness, and if she could not grant me that, to try at least to understand the feelings which had prompted me to write the letters which had been the means of separating us. I told her of the hopeless state of mind into which I had fallen, and that I believed that my life would be aimless unless she would touch the magic spring which would set my blood aglow once more and arouse the dormant ambition within me to accomplish something in the world.

I wrote on and on. I exhausted my logic and mental powers to make her understand. I reviewed my visit to the Pines at length, from the moment I had met Colonel Turpin to the last interview I had had with her. My first mistake, I told her, had been in letting my introduction to

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her and her mother, as a relative of the Kentucky Palmers, go unchallenged. I explained how I believed myself to have been merely a boarder, and the almost fatal mistake I had made in speaking to the Colonel on the subject. Such hospitality I was unaccustomed to, nor do I now fully understand the promptings of that kind old heart when he invited me to the Pines. I told her of my life and of my work; how I had come into her section with the bitterest feelings against it. My one ambition, I told her, was to arouse a hostile sentiment in New England against the political party then in power in nearly all the Southern States. I did not conceal from her the satisfaction I had felt when this assignment had been given me, nor my disappointment when I learned afterwards that I was not to touch on politics in my letters. I told her of my resolution to

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leave the Pines on the day after I had arrived there, but how that resolve melted as snow before the sun when I had seen her and looked into her eyes; how step by step she had led me to look upon life with a broader and a kindlier view and had brought me finally to a full understanding of her section and her people, and how she had made me to know for the first time what my father meant when he was wont to say that all the two great sections of the country needed was to get acquainted.

The letter which had so offended her, I said, would be the means of bringing thousands of persons to a proper appreciation of her homeland and the Southern character, just as the facts embodied in it had caused me to change the opinions I had held once. I did not believe my offence was past forgiveness, and I begged her that in a spirit of fairness she would try

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to appreciate the impulses of one whose instincts seemed to be to write of things as they are and whose training had led him always to seek out those things to describe which were novel and of interest. I followed this letter with another, but with no better result. I wearied the postal officials with questions and got them to go through the general delivery a half dozen times a day.

I do not know how it would have ended had the thought not come to me, as if by inspiration, that I could, at least, be of some small service to her, yet keep my identity in the background. After waiting in Augusta one more week in anxious hope that each day might bring a letter from her, I took the train for Atlanta, and there began a search for the holders of the mortgage on the Pines. With good references I presented myself at the office of one of

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the large trust companies and authorized its agents to trace the mortgage and to secure it at any cost. After weeks of incessant work we traced the holders somewhere in the southern part of the State, and an agent of the company was dispatched there to take up the mortgage. The utmost caution was necessary to secure the consent of Bud without exciting his suspicion. The holders of the paper were instructed to say that they had to sell and that they had found a company whose business it was to lend money willing to accept it. Nothing was said about reducing the interest. It was not until the transfer had been accomplished that it was made known to Bud that the company had reduced the interest from six to four per cent.

I had followed the transaction with the keenest interest, and the officials who were in my confidence became as interested almost

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as I. I told them that under no circumstances were the Turpins to know anything about me; that everything must be done through them. They understood the necessity of secrecy, as I told them that the beneficiaries of this act would reject it and force a foreclosure had they any reason to suspect that the interest had been reduced through any desire to assist them in any way. Satisfied that I had done something for Miss Ellen, I determined to leave for the West. It was while going to take my train that a circumstance occurred that delayed my departure for several days more. I was late and was hurrying through the depot when I ran fairly in the arms of Bud. I did not recognize him at first, and it was only when I stepped back with a conventional apology that I saw the strong outlines of his face and knew it to be that of Miss Ellen's brother. It was only a mo-

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mentary glimpse I had of him, but he looked older and more careworn, it seemed to me. He seemed preoccupied and did not recognize me, for, lowering my face, I hurried past him and reached the waiting-room. I abandoned all intention of taking the train that day, for I at once suspected that my secret had become known and that Bud had come to Atlanta with the determination of either having the transfer revoked or else forcing me to accept the former interest on the mortgage. By a circuitous route I reached my hotel and, sending for a messenger, dispatched a note at once to the company informing the officials of the arrival of Mr. Turpin.

The next day I learned that Bud, thinking the transaction somewhat queer, had come to Atlanta to see about it himself, and I strongly believed that Miss Ellen had urged him to it to satisfy herself that I

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was in no way connected with the benefit which those at the Pines would derive from the reduction of the interest. Bud demanded to know to whom his family was indebted for this unlooked-for piece of generosity. My agent told him that these mortgages had become very valuable and that his company had been authorized to secure as many of them as possible and to reduce the interest on them to four per cent. Satisfied that the matter was a business transaction, Bud left for the Pines again, and I had reason to believe, with a lighter heart.

Lost in the background and congratulating myself on the success of my scheme, I wandered into the West. The face of Ellen was ever before me. Night and day, the picture of her, clad in a simple gingham frock, her sleeves rolled up, and her hand pointing in the direction of the old me-

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morial bridge, was ever in my mind. Several times I tried to resume my writing, but my pen seemed to drop from my fingers or else my mind refused to respond to my will. In dejection of spirit my head would fall over on my arms and I would sit for hours dreaming of the Pines and Miss Ellen. In my apathy I journeyed to Japan, and for a while life seemed brighter in that mosaic looking country, but go where I would there was ever recurring to my thoughts the picture of Miss Ellen, and my heart would swell and tears rush unbidden to my eyes as I remembered our parting. There was talk of war between my country and Spain, but this interested me little; I seemed to have lost my sense of the proportions of things. Resolved at last to take up the thread of my life again and begin anew, I started for the States. Almost the first thing I learned

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on reaching the Pacific slope was the fact that war had been declared. The will of an indignant people had swept aside politics and diplomacy and had surged with such force about the nation's rulers that no one dared stand in its path.

The martial spirit of my ancestors had never burned within me, for my mind had always been set in other directions, and my pursuits were those of peace. Never hesitating for a moment, however, I started across the continent. By telegraph and letters I collected my scattered influences and, backed by my delegation in Congress, asked the Governor of my State for a commission. It was secured without much trouble, and I was mustered in the service as a first lieutenant of volunteers in one of the regiments from Massachusetts.

IX.

THEN began the weary weeks—and months, it seemed to some of us—of waiting. The excitement of enlisting and drilling the men, organizing the companies, and getting the recruits uniformed acted on me like a tonic. I ceased to brood over my disappointment, and while my love for Miss Ellen was as great as ever, yet I felt that I had regained my manhood, and the war spirit, once aroused in me, drove me like a master. The day for quitting the State was a sad one for many, but it was not so for me. My heart bounded with joy when the order for our movement was read at Headquarters. Of all the officers I think I was the only one whose departure was not blessed with the tears of mother, sister, or sweetheart. My father, now old and feeble, came to see me, and his eyes became

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wet as he beheld me for the first time in my uniform and folded me in his arms. My mother had long been dead—in fact, I could scarcely remember her at all. Before saying good-by to my father I gave him a letter and made him promise that should anything happen to me he would send it to the address on the envelope.

He looked at me sadly for a moment and said,—

“Does she live in the South, Howard, and is that why you have stayed away so long?”

I told him yes, and turned away my head that he might not see what it had cost me to speak of her. He laid his hand gently on my shoulder and said softly, I thought sadly,—

“We Palmers have never been lucky there, my son,” and I thought I understood many little things in his life and knew

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then why he never had anything but what was kind to say of that southern country when he heard it under discussion. I grasped his hand and held it for a moment.

“May God protect you and bring you safe to me again,” was all he said, and left me.

Our regiment was only ordered to Camp Meade, but it was a start. The days there were dreary ones, and I shall never forget the shout our boys put up when the order which turned our faces to Camp Thomas, at Chickamauga, was read to them. It set our blood on fire, and I cannot repress my feelings of State pride even now when I recall the happy faces of those Bay State fellows as they prepared to shoulder their muskets and start for the south. A majority of the regiment wanted to be brigaded with other regiments from Massachusetts, but with wisdom and foresight the

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Chief Executive commanded that the troops from the North should be brigaded with those from the South and West. It was a wise policy that threw the men from Michigan with those from Texas and those from California with those from Maine and Vermont, and the men from Massachusetts with the honest fellows from Georgia. The spirit of friendship which had been growing for over thirty years was to be cemented by an alliance against a common enemy. This was how we found ourselves in the same brigade with a Georgia regiment and with another from Kentucky.

We mingled with one another from the first on friendly terms, we shared one anothers' rations and nursed one anothers' sick. I met every Georgian with an outstretched hand, for I felt somehow that they had claims on me which the others did not possess. The individual was lost in

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that great, crowded camp, and those with whom I talked of the Turpins did not seem to know them. But I was destined to hear news of my friends much sooner than I thought.

I had been sent to Division Headquarters one day with a message from my Colonel. As I stepped under the awning of the tent I saw an officer in a major's uniform sitting at a table reading some reports. The face was partially in shadow, but I saw at once that it was Bud.

How much he knew I did not know. I was eager to learn. He saw me before I spoke, and not waiting, as I had done, he leaped from the table, scattering the contents over the floor, and rushed to me with arms outstretched. Impulsively he threw one arm around my neck and with the other grasped my hand. He saw how deep my feeling was and did not speak at once.

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“Bud,” I asked finally, “how are all at the Pines?” It was the question which was most natural to my lips, for I had been hungering, yet dreading, to hear news of them.

“About the same. Nothing ever changes there,” he said.

“Your father and mother?” I asked.

“Both are well, thank God!”

“And Miss Ellen?” I ventured.

For a moment his face clouded when he told me she was not like what she used to be. Then suddenly, as if some idea had shot across his mind for the first time, he dropped my hand and, looking me squarely in the face, said:

“She has never been the same since you were there.” He seemed suddenly to stiffen with dignity as he added: “Palmer, if I thought your visit there had wrought this change, Heaven only knows

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what I would do. Before taking my hand again answer me honestly, Palmer: did you trifle with my little sister when you were with us at the Pines?"

"Before God I did not," I cried. "She rejected my love, and that is why I left so suddenly. I will tell you all about it, Bud, as I wanted to do before I left," I said.

"I believe you, Palmer," he said, laying his hand on my shoulder again. "But keep your secret, whatever it may be, for it is hers also and you have no right to betray it."

I grasped his hand again and stood looking out into the dusty camp street and over the hills in the distance.

"Who is with them?" I asked presently.

"My younger brother, little Brent. He is keeping the family alive while I am doing what I can to keep alive its reputation," he said with an attempt at humor that cut

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me like a knife. "You may not know how we feel about this sort of thing down here," he added, "but to us it is as dear as life itself."

He then told me that it was Miss Ellen who had urged him to go to the front and who had given him the strength to leave the Pines. From his Colonel I learned afterwards that he had enlisted as a private, but was soon given a commission for an excellent record, and he owed his present place to his ability to handle men and not to political influences.

After that first meeting we saw each other daily, and when not on duty together we would light our pipes and wander through the dusty and fever-stricken streets, smoke, and talk of home, but never did we speak of Ellen, though she was constantly in my thoughts, and I believe in her brother's also.

Disease had broken out in camp and ty-

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phoid raged with deadly effect during that long, cruel summer. One evening I went to bed feverish and not feeling myself at all. The day had been one of horror in the camp, and despatches were flying between Headquarters and the War Department. The evening shades brought no relief to the tired soldiers. No one seemed to be asleep, and the men were stretched outside their dog tents. The ground was dry and hot, and the moon hung in the heavens like a great ball of fire. Just as the midnight hour was called I heard someone in the direction of the Kentucky regiment, that lay across the road from us, begin to whistle "The Old Kentucky Home." The notes fell sweet and clear across the tented field. Before he had finished a bar someone took up the tune and whistled a second. One after another joined in the melody, and finally there was hardly a man in the regiment, so it seemed to me, who was

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not whistling. It died away as suddenly as it had been inspired, and I think the camp slept with sweeter rest for having heard the serenade. I fell into a fitful sleep and only waked to partial consciousness when reveille was sounded.

I made an effort to rise, but fell back, too weak to move again. The surgeon came in shortly after that and took my temperature. It was with a sickening sense of humiliation that I heard him say that it was a bad case of fever. Before I could be moved Bud came in, and I learned afterwards that he feared I would be taken down. I turned my eyes to him in mute appeal. He touched my hand and I drew him near me.

“ If I should die, Bud, will you tell Miss Ellen that I have always loved her and that my last thoughts were of her? ” I said in a half whisper.

He pressed my hand for an answer and

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placed his other on my fevered temple. I heard him ask the doctor to let him have charge of this patient. "His life is dearer than my own," he said. I saw the surgeon nod his head and heard him add that it would take great nursing to pull me through.

It was the last thing I remember for many a day. I heard afterwards how he nursed me; how he slept by my cot at night and sat by it all day. Afterwards he told me that I talked only of the Pines in my delirium, and for the first time he had learned that it was I who had taken up the mortgage and reduced the interest. The day came when the surgeons despaired of my life, and then it was that he telegraphed his sister. I have that faded bit of paper on which he wrote the message framed and hanging over my desk and underneath it her answer.

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“Lieutenant Palmer lying at point of death. Your name incessantly on his lips. Don’t come if you think best, but it might save his life,” was what he sent.

The answer was even shorter. It read simply:

“Keep him alive until I reach there.”

They told me that her nursing saved my life. One touch from her hand and my delirium would subside, and though I lay unconscious for days she took little rest, and when she would lay down it was Bud who would take her place at my side.

One morning just after orders came for my regiment to start for Cuba my eyes opened to the world and my senses returned. Bud was by my side. I knew then that Miss Ellen had been there, for the influence of her presence was with me still.

“Where is she?” I asked.

“Getting a little needed rest,” he an-

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swered. "The crisis was passed last night and she knows you are saved to her."

The big, strong fellow could stand it no longer. He knelt by my bed and, holding my hand, buried his face in the covering. I knew that he was weeping for very joy for his sister. I turned over wearily and laid my hand on his head.

"Bud," I whispered, "has she forgiven?"

"Yes, Howard," she said. "She has told you so herself many a time in the long watches of the night."

I lapsed into unconsciousness again, and when I awoke Miss Ellen was by my side. She it was who told me that my regiment was going and held my hand in sympathy, for she knew how it would hurt me to be left behind. She read me the President's noble words of praise for the men who had answered to the call for troops, and draw-

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ing from her pocket a little slip of paper read me what the Executive had to say of those who had fallen ill with fever and who had served their country only in the camp. It was only a short message from our President in answer to an invitation to come to Chickamauga, but it cheered many a poor fellow who, as I, lay stricken with the fever and who was forced to see his comrades march away to duty at the front. It was the message just as it came and as she read it her eyes filled with tears:

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON.

“Major-General commanding Camp Thomas, Chickamauga.

“Replying to your invitation, I beg to say that it would give me great pleasure to show by a personal visit to Chickamauga Park my high regard for the forty thousand troops of your command who so patriotically responded to the call for volunteers and who have been for up-

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wards of two months making ready for any service and sacrifice the country might require. My duties, however, will not admit of absence from Washington at this time. The highest tribute that can be paid to the soldier is to say that he performed his full duty. The field of duty is determined by his government, and wherever that chances to be is the place of honor. All have helped in the great cause, whether with fever in camp or in battle, and when peace comes all will be alike entitled to the nation's gratitude.

“WILLIAM MCKINLEY.”

After that she talked to me of the Pines, and then it was she told me she had never read my letters to her; that she was afraid she might forgive me, and that she did not want to do that, even in her heart. When I was strong enough to sit up I was given a leave, and it was Miss Ellen herself who undertook to make all arrangements for my

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journey to the Pines, for it was there that I wanted to go to recuperate. Finally the day came when my regiment was to move. I was propped up with pillows that I might see it break camp and march away.

“Ellen,” I said as I saw the last company, the one to which I belonged, fall into fours, “but for you I could not stand that,” pointing to the retreating regiment.

She turned to me and, making a low courtesy, as she had done that April night now many months ago, she said, smiling all the while through her tears:

“You were not made for a soldier, my Lord. You have been forced to lay aside the sword; you must take up the pen again.”

And then I knew for the first time that she had not only forgiven me, but that at last she had understood.

